

**TOWARDS A GLOBAL DIMENSION:
EU'S CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND BEYOND**

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in the Neighborhood and Beyond*

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TOWARDS A GLOBAL DIMENSION:
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AND BEYOND

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Preface

With this publication, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation gives continuity to a cycle of initiatives about European foreign policy. This publication has emerged from the work of a debate and reflection group on Conflicts, Peace and Democracy, under an initiative promoted by the representation of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Portugal since the end of 2005: the Circle of Social and Political Reflection (CIRESF).

CIRESF is composed of three thematic groups:

- 1) Conflicts, Peace and Democracy
- 2) Global and Political Economy
- 3) Cohesion, Social Integration and Sustainable Development

Each group is composed of a restricted number of ad-hoc members from diverse backgrounds and selected according to a periodic agenda. Giving continuity to the work developed by the Group “Conflicts, Peace and Democracy”, this publication addresses the EU’s capacity as a global actor in some of the most problematic arenas of conflict.

The first book resulting from this group’s work dealt with transatlantic relations and conflict management. We now focus on

the EU's identity and notion of security, as portrayed by its foreign policy in relation to its immediate and not so immediate neighborhood. These issues are here examined by young scholars with specific expertise in these areas.

Our aim is to continue to contribute to the debate and interaction between the political system, academia and civil society, in line with the mission and initiatives of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

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Introduction

ANDRÉ BARRINHA¹

Is the European Union (EU) a civilian power, a military power, or is it a normative power? What exactly is the European Union? Many authors have been trying to answer that question especially in the last few years with the increase in the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) activities. One of the major cornerstones in this development was the approval of the European Security Strategy in December 2003, which establishes the basis for EU action in the world within a securitised framework.

As developed in the chapter written by Ana Isabel Xavier, Daniel Pinéu, and João Reis Nunes, the EU's approach to its security is more than an attempt to solve paramount problems; it is an attempt to define its own identity. The stability of its neighborhood comes, therefore as a fundamental step to promote its own security. In order to accomplish that, the EU needs to develop a whole range of relationships with different actors in different countries. Relationships which might cut across different interests and have contradictory goals. For instance, how can

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stability be promoted hand in hand with the EU's normative vision of human rights and democratisation promotion? Which should come first?

The goal of this book is to contribute to these discussions with some new critical insights, focusing on the EU 'actorness' issue, especially in regard to its relationship with the neighborhood². With the exception of the first chapter and the conclusion, the most of the authors does not directly approach the 'actoners' issue. Nevertheless, one way or the other it will be present in all the chapters. In effect, the basic argument that runs through the whole book is that whatever the EU is or wants to be in the world, it is in the relation with its closest neighbors that it must assume its position first.

Russia and the European Neighborhood Policy

Russia was chosen as the first case study of this book, for a specific reason: it is the EU's biggest and most powerful neighbor. In "Two unequal partners: the EU and its Russian neighbor", Maria Raquel Freire highlights the ambiguous relation between Brussels and Moscow. A relation that is seen as one of increasing cooperation but where mutual (in)security perceptions occasionally bring back old fears and resentments. The 1990s idea of a strong Europe enlarging its zone of influence to areas previously under the tight control of Moscow, in face of a weak and defeated Russia, is increasingly losing ground to a relationship between two less-unequal actors. In any case, the common interest in a stable, shared vicinity is a strong factor that obliges both the EU

² Here understood as the geographical space surrounding the EU and not necessarily just the countries that participate in the European Neighborhood Policy.

and Russia to work together, eventually towards a strategic partnership.

An issue further complicating the relationship between both actors is the European Neighborhood Policy, as it stretches all the way to the Russian borders and includes several countries previously under the close control of Moscow. The European Neighborhood Policy was developed in 2004 to promote stability and democracy among EU's neighbors. This policy involves countries from Eastern Europe (Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus), South Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan), and South Mediterranean (Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria). The basic tools of this policy are the Action Plans, documents defined between Brussels and each partner country. Each document provides a tailor made program that includes a broad range of issues, from economic measures to the fight against terrorism.

In this book, there will be three chapters related to the ENP: one related to South Caucasus, another one related to Western Sahara, and a third one focusing on the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

In the chapter on the South Caucasus, Licinia Simão discusses the new EU strategic priorities for Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, underlining the reasons that led Brussels to increasing the attention given the South Caucasus: instability, frozen conflicts and energy resources.

In a text written by Rui Novais, the conflict in Western Sahara will be offered as a good example of how the EU image of a common policy for its neighborhood sometimes collides with distinct interests of its member states, making it look weak and incapable of responding to conflict situations that should be a priority, in order to make its security policy minimally coherent.

When talking about EU inaction, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict comes as a case in point. The most intractable and relevant conflict in its vicinity has been used for years as the ultimate proof

of the EU's 'non-existence' as a prominent international actor. In this chapter, Ana Santos Pintos will explore the consequences of that 'secondary role' both for the conflict and for the EU's own identity.

Outside the European Neighborhood Policy, inside the EU?

The Balkans and Turkey were not included in the ENP as it was thought they would be able to join the EU in a relatively short time span. As a consequence, the EU's influence has in both cases been more largely felt than in other already mentioned examples.

The Balkans are usually presented as the ultimate example of EU's foreign policy activity. Nonetheless, as Pedro Caldeira Rodrigues explores in his chapter, the current problem regarding the Kosovo status could be the beginning of a new period of instability in the Balkans, placing the EU at the centre of a new crisis which it might not be able to deal with. In that case, the 'Balkans example' could end up as another foreign policy disaster for Brussels.

Though far from being a disaster, the EU relationship with Turkey is turning into a strong headache for both sides. In the only chapter dedicated to a EU candidate state, the focus will be on the EU's export of security practices and discourses to Turkey within the accession process. Turkey's reaction in face of those external pressures and the consequences for the relationship between Ankara and Brussels will also be explored.

Beyond the near neighborhood

Moving beyond the EU's vicinity, Laura Ferreira-Pereira, focuses on the implications of the EU strategy for Africa. Following

the pattern applied to its 'near' neighborhood, the EU seems determined to promote Africa's stability as a way of promoting its own security. Africa comes as the next step in the EU increasingly affirmative role in the world. Finally, in the concluding chapter, Bruno Cardoso Reis discusses how relevant that role is and how relevant it is for the EU to play a significant role in world affairs.

Problematizing the EU as a Global Actor:
the Role of identity and security
in European Foreign Policy

JOÃO REIS NUNES³

DANIEL PINÉU⁴

ANA ISABEL XAVIER⁵

Introduction

This article aims to provide a theoretical approach to the study of the foreign policy tools of the European Union — namely the European Neighborhood Policy, the Common Foreign and Security Policy and enlargement⁶. Departing from an analysis and problematization of the idea of the EU as a global actor, it will contribute to a critical analysis of European policies aimed at ‘stabilizing’, ‘normalizing’ and ‘democratizing’ their (global) neighbors — intentions that are normally connected with seldom examined assumptions regarding European identity and understandings of security.

The argument will proceed as follows: the first sections will introduce the discussion by analyzing how the EU’s foreign policy tools were understood in connection with particular definitions of

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⁶ We are thankful to the other contributors of this volume for their helpful comments and suggestions.

the Union's global role and its functions in the international system. By exploring the several dimensions of 'actorness', this part of the argument will introduce the debate about the supposedly 'soft', 'civilian' and 'normative' character of the EU's projection of power through its foreign policy mechanisms. After that, the composition of the overall European character will be problematized focusing on two interrelated spheres: identity and security. The objective is to question how the definition of 'challenges' and 'threats' is inherently connected with a historical effort to form a European identity — a process that cannot be separated from a permanent negotiation of the meaning of 'security'. This discussion will provide the springboard for a critical reading of the several 'challenges' mentioned in official documents and discourses of justification: rather than being the natural and necessary response to factual 'threats', the definition of the European foreign policy mechanisms is embedded in a web of political and social processes, in which negotiation, struggle and normativity play a crucial role.

The European Union as a global actor — situating the debate

Over the last few years, debates in European circles have demonstrated the interconnectedness between the definition of 'challenges' and 'threats' and the assumption of a global 'actorness' by the European Union (EU)⁷. Nowadays, the EU's status as a global player is an increasingly important topic of discussion and a taken-for-granted reality in official documents issued by the EU⁸. According to standard definitions, the charac-

⁷ The term 'global actor' was first applied to the context of the EU in Bretherton and Vogler (1999).

⁸ A good example is the European Security Strategy of 2003, which states boldly that '[a]s a union of 25 states with over 450 million people producing a quarter

ter of the European ‘global player’ is based in the triad ‘human rights, democracy and good governance’, and comes up as an addition to the former understanding of the EU’s global role, associated almost exclusively with external relations with former colonies and based on international trade and humanitarian co-operation.

Nowadays, the enlarged Union comprises more than 450 million of people; it has the second most valuable currency in the international financial markets; it is the world’s biggest economic trader with Africa, Latin America and with the newest competitive economies such as India and China; it is the biggest donor of humanitarian aid; and it purports to be a role model of peace, security and good governance all over the world. In sum, it seems that 50 years after the signature of the Treaties of Rome, the EU is increasingly recognized in the international arena as a power worthy of comparison to the USA.

Several questions arise when we take this ‘global actor status’ into consideration. The first question is the ‘naturalness’ or facticity of the status itself: the emphasis put by official documents on the ‘global actorness’ of the EU can be seen as a fairly recent trend in the permanent discursive negotiation that attempts to situate the EU in the global political world. Thus, official statements putting forward the idea that the EU is a global actor must be seen as something more than the verbalization of a factual reality, but rather as a contribution to an on-going negotiation regarding the place of the EU in the world. In other words, it is worth emphasising from the start that the status of global actor cannot be deemed as ‘newly-acquired’ — it is contested, under

of the world’s Gross National Product (GNP), and with a wide range of instruments at its disposal, the European Union is inevitably a global player’. European Council, ‘A Secure Europe in a Better World — European Security Strategy’, 12 September 2003, available at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf> (last accessed 20/07/07).

permanent negotiation and is always produced through its practical applications.

The rise of the discourse of global-actorness has been accompanied by a heated debate concerning the status of the EU as a 'normative power', that is, as a power that functions by 'inspiring' and 'influencing' the norms of other countries' and regions' towards peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law and human rights.⁹ In fact, one can say that the definition of global actorness for the EU is inherently connected with the circumscription of a role that is specific to the EU and through which it can be seen as an alternative to other powers or, at least, as something different to what exists.

The idea of the EU as a 'normative power' has its roots in a theoretical reconceptualization of power attempted by some authors as early as the 1970's. Authors like Duchêne argued that the EU should be seen as a different kind of power: not the traditionally strategic or military power that is usually taken as default in 'power politics' analyses of the international system, but rather a 'civilian power'. Duchêne foresaw the EU as a model of stabilization, reconciliation and peace for other regions in the world¹⁰. Even in the absence of a military dimension, a civilian power would have the ability to influence other international actors and affirm its political, diplomatic and economic presence. Therefore, 'the effectiveness of civilian power depends not only on the external promotion of international norms, the allocation of development aid, or the effective execution of the Petersberg

⁹ Peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law and human rights are the five core values of the EU that Manners (2002) considers as the foundations of a normative power.

¹⁰ See Duchêne (1972). Duchêne's argument sparked a notorious controversy with Hedley Bull (see Bull 1982). Manner's conception of 'normative power Europe' owes much to Duchêne's formulation, and it too has sparked responses from more realist-oriented authors; see, for example, Hyde-Price (2006).

tasks, but also and above all on what the Union represents... on what Europe does'¹¹.

The diffusion of norms and values beyond the borders of the EU can also be said to be strongly shaped by 'soft power' instruments and considerations¹², and can be witnessed in practice in the European efforts of transformation of traditionally non-democratic states into democratic ones: fair elections are held and supported by the EU, and old, authoritarian-influenced habits and norms are replaced by transitory structures aimed at political stability and economic sustainability and accountability.

From this necessarily brief discussion, it is possible to conclude that the definition of the EU's global actorness has been connected with a set of assumptions regarding the nature of the power that the EU is supposed to wield in the global scenario. The normative character of this power is, as will be seen in this paper, connected with understandings about European identity and security and with the definition of Europe's specificity. Besides this 'niche politics', the normative character of the EU's global actorness also reflects the EU's genesis as a solution of peace and stability to a war-ridden continent, and also the EU's material constraints and political opportunities.

There are, of course, several problems with this, and this chapter can only begin to address them. Can the 'opportunity' to transform the global scenario along more democratic and normative lines be enough to provide a strategic clout to the external role of the EU? Can the diffusion of norms be part of the construction of the EU as a global strategic power? In practice, how is the EU connecting its normative formulations and its strategic concerns? What are the consequences of these policies for the definition of a global position of the EU in the international system,

¹¹ See Duchêne (1972: 217-220).

¹² On soft power, see Nye (2004).

and particularly in relating to its neighborhood, however understood?

Global 'actorness': dimensions and problems

In order to address in more depth the character and construction of the EU's global actorness, it is worth taking into account some of the historical dimensions and functions of the European foreign policy. In this context, Hettne and Soderbaum have identified four different dimensions of foreign policy relations that must be taken into consideration when explaining the connection between the EU's foreign policy mechanisms and understandings of global 'actorness' (2005: 535-552). The first dimension is related with the *enlargement* of the core area of Europe. The 2004 enlargement to ten countries in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the ongoing negotiations with Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, call into question the current borders of Europe and pose new political challenges to the 'European actor'. Secondly, the authors do not ignore the *stabilization processes in the so-called 'neighborhood area'*. As the case-studies in the next chapters will show, the new European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) aims at 'stabilizing' a new region of influence, as a way of building strategic connections that will expand the role of the EU as a global actor. Thirdly, the authors also emphasize the *bilateral relationship with some of the world's great powers*, namely the USA and Russia. Finally, the fourth dimension of the external relations is *inter-regional*, namely with respect to other organized regions, such as the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group (ACP), for instance.

It is along these four dimensions that the EU shows the character of its foreign policy tools: 'the type of power exercised by the EU is of the 'soft' rather than the 'hard' type and based on

economic instruments, dialogue and diplomacy' (Hettne and Soderbaum 2005: 536). A good example of this perceived 'softness' is the crisis management character of the EU, undertaken by the EU as a collective unit or by specific member states. With its missions in Kosovo, Afghanistan or Democratic Republic of Congo, the EU has shown that it increasingly sees the promotion of security and stability in other regions of the world as part and parcel of its own security and defense¹³.

In this context, the Human Security Doctrine is a clear influence in the definition of foreign policy reasonings and practical instruments¹⁴ although it was never officially adopted by the EU's institutions. For the 13 authors of this document, it is assumed that the 'new threats' facing the EU today (terrorism, weapons of mass destruction proliferation, regional conflicts, failing or rogue states, organized crime, environment depletion...) are global in the sense that they constitute sources of global insecurity, albeit felt more directly in a specific place or by a specific people, and that Europe must develop a renewed military capability adapted to the new security scenario. One of the specific proposals is a civil-military mechanism based on a human security response force, under the direction of the new European foreign minister, to be composed by the 60,000 military of the rapid reaction force of Helsinki designed for Petersberg missions (since the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997), together with a 15,000 voluntary civilian body (comprising police, human rights trainers, humanitarian

¹³ This also demonstrates the gradual expansion of the concept of "neighborhood", in actual fact if not in the letter of official documents, from the more formal and circumscribed ENP to a more flexible and expanding "global neighborhood".

¹⁴ See 'A Human Security Doctrine for Europe — The Barcelona Report of the Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities', 15 September 2004, available at <http://www.lse.ac.uk/Depts/global/Publications/HumanSecurityDoctrine.pdf> (last accessed 20/07/07).

and development agents, researchers, etc.) with an effective deployment capacity.

Several problems arise from this understanding of global actorness as connected with means and conceptions of power and capabilities. The first one is the balance between soft and hard power: it has been argued that ‘the EU needs both to exercise influence through soft power and be able to deploy hard power in a targeted and strategic way’¹⁵; on the other hand, it could be argued that the existence of hard power capabilities undermines any aspiration of the EU towards the status of normative power — in other words, the two realities can be seen as mutually exclusive. Another problem is the schism between intentions and expectations on one hand, and capabilities on the other: a quick look at the practical application of the EU’s capacities allows us to see that the EU is not only still in search of a clear strategy, but is also facing a gap between its security needs and the instruments available — even if we take into account recent efforts of operational integration and the setting up of joint civil and military capacities.

This problem is not new, and in 1993 Christopher Hill could already argue that the Community is not an effective international actor, in terms both of its capacity to produce collective decisions and its impacts on events. The realist view that the state is the basis of power and interest in the international system, and that the uneven distribution of military strength is still a formidable factor in determining outcomes, has correspondingly damaged the Community’s image as a powerful and progressive force in the reshaping of the international system (1993: 306).

According to Hill, there was a ‘capability-expectations gap’, namely regarding the EU’s ‘ability to agree, its resources, and the

¹⁵ Giovanni Grevi, ‘Reflections after the NO votes: what makes the EU an international actor?’, 2 November 2005, <http://www.iss-eu.org/new/analysis/analy129.html> (last accessed 20/07/07). The balance between these two kinds of power is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this discussion.

instruments at its disposal' (1993: 315). This gap was mostly evident in what concerned the actual role of the (then) European Community and the set of expectations it had mobilized and potential it demonstrated.

For Hill, even though the EC had an already significant role in the international system — namely in the stabilization of Western Europe and in the management of world trade — it had the potential to assume other important functions: a replacement for the USSR in the global balance of power (a candidate to fill the vacuum left by the Soviet hegemony in a bipolar world); the role of regional pacifier (a mediator/coercive arbiter when the regional peace and stability of a certain region was under threat); of global intervener (using economic and political instruments when a state's or region's instability threatened European interests and the international community's values and principles); of mediator of conflicts (diplomatic action, including coercion and conditionality measures to enable third parties to resolve their conflicts and regression to undemocratic status); of bridge between rich and poor (due to a special relationship, a heritage of the colonial links with a great number of developing countries); and of joint supervisor of the world economy (acting coherently and consistently in the IMF, World Bank, G7 summits or other institutions where the EC negotiated directly with the United States or Japan).

What is interesting to note is that Hill was writing when the EC was still composed of twelve member states; however, an incapacity to act according to expectations and potential could already be observed. The same situation can be said to exist nowadays, but now with 27 member states and a new and complex network of institutional, legal, civilian and military instruments. There are still important gaps when it comes to the ability to agree (the ability to speak with one voice, with a single foreign policy based on mutual co-operation), to the institutional resources at the EU's

disposal (namely the ESDP means and the conciliation with NATO) and to the instruments available (operational capacity in the security and defence field).

In this context, Bretherton and Vogler argue that in analyzing actorness — and, particularly, the assumption by the EU of the role of a global actor — it is necessary to take into account three key elements: opportunity (to act in the world), presence (effective capacity to stand outside its borders, influencing other actors' developments) and capability (to fulfil opportunities) (1999: 2). At the same time, they argue, an analysis of actorness varies according to the sector under scrutiny — economic, cultural, political or strategic. In a similar way, Caporaso and Jupille (1998) also explored the meaning and content of global actorness, advancing four prerequisites to this status: recognition, authority, autonomy and cohesion. Combining Bretherton and Vogler's and Caporaso and Jupille's theses allows us to conclude that if the EU is to perform as a strategic actor on the global stage, a lot must be done in order to avoid double standards and dissident voices that put the political cohesion of the EU into question, not only at internal but also external level:

a renewed internal political cohesion is a necessary pre-condition for the Union to stand up to its reputation of global norm-setter and to perform effectively as a strategic international actor in foreign and security policy¹⁶.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the European Council of 15th and 16th of June 2006 discussed and accepted a document issued by the European Commission entitled 'Europe in the World: Some Practical Proposals for Greater Coherence, Effectiveness and Visibility'. This communication aimed at proposing

¹⁶ Giovanni Grevi, *op. cit.*

some measures to strengthen the EU's external action, defining a collective purpose and balancing the required political will with the necessary policy instruments¹⁷.

This problem led Ginsberg to producing a more nuanced, and less optimistic, account of the global role of the EU: 'scholars concur that the EU has an international 'presence' (it is visible in regional and global fora) and that it exhibits *some elements* of 'actorness' (it is an international actor in some areas but not in others)' (1999: 432, emphasis added). In response, it was exactly with the objective of lessening the expectations-capability gap, as well as developing and affirming the idea of a global actorness that Javier Solana (as the high representative for European security and defence policy) presented the document 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', also known as European Security Strategy (ESS)¹⁸ in December 2003.

In the ESS, it is argued that political will, resolve and preventive engagement were more valuable than the use of force, and that this should be the way to affirm the European Union in the international scene. Solana intended to reshape the European Union as a global actor, demonstrating that the EU could be seen as an important player on the international stage. The Brussels European Council of 12 and 13th December 2003 accepted Solana's ESS, along with the challenge to establish a military planning capability document. Since the Brussels summit, the member-states have agreed on a new European Defence Agency and the development of joint 'battle groups'¹⁹ for peace-keeping

¹⁷ Document available at http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/euw_com06_278_en.pdf (last accessed 21/07/07).

¹⁸ European Council, 'A Secure Europe in a Better World — European Security Strategy', 12 September 2003, available at <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf> (last accessed 20/07/07).

¹⁹ Following this "battlegroups" logic introduced in the "Headline Goal 2003", EU member states decided in the European Council of 17 and 18 June 2004 to

operations²⁰. These developments were taken in consideration in the final version of the Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe²¹.

The key challenge lies in the strategy's implementation, which needs to be focused around much tighter and more explicit goals; without this it will fail due to the member-states resistance, active or passive. One thing may be argued though: 'there is a floor beneath which the EU as an international actor is not likely to fall and a springboard from which the EU may expand activity, and new members are required to accept the *acquis* in total' (Ginsberg 1999: 437). The so-called *acquis communautaire* assures that 'no matter what the future holds for the EU's capacity to act internationally, members are bound to a repertoire of fixed foreign policy positions'(Ginsberg 1999: 436). Moreover, member-states seem to recognise that when the EU speaks as one single voice, its global weight is increased, and that the special partnerships with the regional blocs tend to project the EU's role. Therefore, it can be concluded that as a result of what has already been achieved, as well as the potential of the EU and the increasing expectations surrounding its intervention, global actorness is slowly becoming a focal point that

commit themselves, with the "Headline Goal 2010", to applying a fully coherent approach to the whole spectrum of crisis management operations, including humanitarian and rescue tasks, peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. Based on the concepts of interoperability, deployability and sustainability, the main core value of those "battlegroups" is the high readiness as a response to a crisis either as a stand-alone force or as part of a larger operation enabling follow-on phases.

²⁰ Moreover, the ESS assumes a particular importance regarding the decisions taken at the Summit in Santa Maria da Feira on the association of military instruments to humanitarian assistance, civil crisis management and political and economic development.

²¹ Available at <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2004:310:SOM:EN:HTML> (last accessed 21/07/07).

orients the decisions of both European institutions and member-states.

Thus, one can see that the definition of the EU's global actorhood is intertwined with the debates surrounding the EU's identity traits, which find contingent sedimentation in the *acquis*. However, this 'deposit' of achievements cannot be seen as a bedrock of the EU, but rather as a pool of resources from which efforts of contestation and justification arise. This means that, in order to make sense of the dilemmas of EU's global actorhood, it is necessary to explore how the definition of a global role for the EU is played out in the identity realm, and how this identity realm is constituted. How is the idea of actorhood incorporated into the EU's understanding of itself — not only through the sedimentation/negotiation of an *acquis communautaire*, but also through the construction of prospective ideas about the role of the EU in the global sphere? In other words, in order to fully understand and problematize the idea of the EU as a global actor, first and foremost it is necessary to ask how the EU is related to its legacy and past, how it conceives itself in the present and how it sees itself as having some kind of purpose or 'mission'. It is exactly to this exploration that we now turn.

The connection between global actorhood, identity and security

The discussion carried out so far has allowed us to conclude that any understanding of the foreign policy tools of the EU — as embedded in a reflection about the EU's global actorhood — must be attempted alongside an investigation of how these tools constitute realms in which European identity is played out, constituted and reproduced. At the same time, it is necessary to enquire into the driving forces behind particular constructions

of identity, that is, the content of particular configurations of the relationship between the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ of Europe — taking into account the problematization (or lack thereof) of these two poles. The following sections argue that in order to fully understand how European identity is intertwined with its foreign policy tools and its sense of global actorness, one has to take into account the constitutive function that understandings of security play in the configuration of both identity and politics.

As Michael Williams (1998a and 1998b) argues, questions of identity are intertwined with most theories of IR and security and as we shall see in greater detail, this is because a particular understanding of identity is at the core of the political project of modernity. In fact, the process of fashioning liberal and modern politics in Europe by bracketing out ‘identity politics’ as early as the aftermath of the Europeans wars of religion by no means entails an absence of identity in European politics — on the contrary, this is a loud silence which must be explored and which holds fruitful insights. To put it simply, *identity matters*.

The relationship between identity and politics has been the object of renewed interest across academic disciplines, especially since the end of the Cold War²². The debate over the constitution of identity has also known significant developments and has tended towards a refusal of the essentialization and naturalization of ‘identity traits’. Thus, if one is to think of the EU as possessing a sense of agency and purpose in global politics (as has been shown in previous sections), one must abandon earlier notions of agents as atomized, rationally choosing units whose decisions take place in neutral contexts in order to maximize their given interests. Instead, one should look at the more richly textured view that social agents are not independent of their social context, and

²² A good illustration of this is Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil (1996).

that their interests and identities are intersubjectively constituted over time as they interact.

In practical terms, this investigation will focus on the historical formation of the modern ‘politics of security’ which, it is argued, constitutes the general backdrop against which any analysis of European identity must be undertaken. In other words, the European ‘genetic code’ will be analyzed in light of the interplay between security and politics in the modern political landscape. The sociological thickness of this enquiry will be achieved with the introduction of the concept of ‘security field’ — an intersection of practices, discourses, institutional interactions and norms that influences the definition of threats and security responses. The ultimate objective is to situate the analysis of the EU’s foreign policy tools within a wider theoretical framework in which (historically and sociologically understood) conceptions and practices of security play a prominent role.

Introducing a ‘security dimension’ in the study of European politics and identity is hardly original; after all, the genesis of the EU can be seen as a security project in its own right, that is, as a mechanism to promote peace and stability in a war-ridden continent²³. In the aftermath of the Cold War, the emergence within the public discourse of the so called ‘new threats’ (nationalist upsurges, drug trafficking, transnational crime, etc.) intensified the relevance of a ‘security component’ in the European project. The importance of security in the debate about the future of Europe cannot be denied, and in 2000, even before the wave of terrorist attacks against Western targets added a sense of urgency to the discussion, many would agree with Kaldor’s confident assertion that ‘the future of the European project depends on the

²³ A good account of the historical evolution of the European project, focusing on its security dimensions, is Dinan (2005).

capacity to maintain security' (2000: 55) in a context of ever-evolving threats.

However, we wish to take a somewhat different approach: security will not be seen as another item in a checklist of the 'dimensions of European integration'; rather, the integration of security into the study of European politics and identity will focus on the constitutive function that security plays in the configuration of politics and identity themselves. In other words, we will analyze to what extent a particular understanding of security is implicated in the constitution of modern politics and identity — and, concomitantly, in the concrete shape that these phenomena are assuming in the case of European integration and policy-making.

While previous sections already pick up the theme of identity, namely on how the EU's institutional machinery has shaped European foreign and security policies in the light of a recently constructed idea of a civilian and normative power, the current section aims to widen and deepen the scope by highlighting the tensions between identity, politics and European security discourses and practices. In practical terms, this will be achieved by: a) investigating the deep and mutually constitutive relationships between politics and security; b) highlighting the tension between a politics which — following two World Wars — needed to remove a nationalistic identity politics from its core, and a politics of *European-ness* which has specifically tried to foster a supra-national European identity; c) bringing out the tension between a modern security politics based on an abstract individual — the citizen — which relates to the national and European regimes of political participation and security provision, and the practices which securitize specific others who are both beyond or below this citizenship; and d) calling attention to how the identity politics of othering and labelling heavily structure the framework in which Europe's CFSP takes place.

*Rethinking the relationship
between (European) security and politics*

Accounts of security and politics have been developed around a set of assumptions regarding the relation between these two realms. The commonsensical view treats security and politics as two separated and self-contained territories. This view can be traced back to classical contractarian thought, which gave theoretical support to a particular view of the genesis of the state, according to which state-building consisted of carving out a realm of order and stability in the midst of unrestrained violence and chaos.

With the state conceived as the sphere in which violence is mitigated, managed and legitimated, and with the realm of the political being circumscribed to the workings of state institutions, 'security' was defined as the realm of the 'untamed' — that which has not been included in the sphere of manageability of the state — and the 'untamable' — the 'outside', which in itself is unknown, suspicious and chaotic. Security became the sphere of what is beyond 'normal' politics, in which extraordinary and potentially disruptive events and circumstances are dealt with — in sum, 'security' is the realm in which normal politics is cancelled and where the normal procedures are suspended. Therefore, security is also the sphere of extraordinary measures, of secrecy and expediency, of fast and unchecked decisions.

This separation between security and politics underlies common understandings of the process of European integration as the construction of an ever-widening political sphere that would override concerns and procedures understood as 'security' i.e. undemocratic. A good example is Ole Wæver's account of the constitution of Western Europe as a security community: according to this author, the latter was achieved through 'a

progressive marginalization of mutual security concerns in favour of other issues' (Wæver 1998: 69)²⁴.

This article argues that this process of subsuming security overlooks important aspects of European politics; in particular, two arguments advanced here will support the claim that it is not possible to conceive a 'purely' political realm in European politics. Rather, European politics and the EU's foreign policy tools are always embedded within particular understandings of security and acquire substance in fields of practice in which security plays a central role.

The first argument concerns the historical genesis of political modernity in general and European politics in particular. For authors like Dillon (1996) and Williams (2005), modern politics is in itself a security project in the sense that it is based on a historical process that has security concerns at its core. Williams has interpreted the genesis of the modern state-system as the result of the practical application of a Hobbesian understanding of fear²⁵, through which the institution of the state as the political domain *par excellence* served as a counterpoint to the threat posed by the state of nature, an anarchic situation in which violence would be unrestrained.

For Huysmans, the security-politics nexus (and, concomitantly, the connection between security and the political constitution of identities) is not incidental to modernity and cannot be reduced to the constitution of institutional arrangements such as the modern state. Rather, security is connected with the politics of identity at both an ontological and a more 'practical' level. The former refers to the constitutive function of security as a strategy for 'fixing social relations into a symbolic and institutional order' (Huysmans

²⁴ Wæver sees the process of 'desecuritization' as a move in which issues are brought back into the realm of politics.

²⁵ For a detailed analysis of the concept of Hobbesian fear, see Robin (2004: 31-50).

1998: 242); this means interpreting security as a signifier, a 'wider framework of meaning (symbolic order, culture or discursive formation) within which we organize particular forms of life' (Huysmans 1998: 228). In this sense, security plays an important role in the constitution of the background around which political communities are built and organized — the constitution of a 'self' in opposition to the 'threatening other', and the practices of labeling 'strangers' and 'enemies', are the foremost manifestation of the role played by security concerns in the constitution of political identities and the political realm in general²⁶.

The second argument concerns the specific content of the 'politics of security', that is, the particular way in which understandings of security are played out in practice. In this context, Huysmans has challenged traditional understandings of security by giving sociological content to the construction of 'insecurity'. For Huysmans, the 'politics of security' acquires practical content in a particular 'security field': following Bourdieu's analysis of the 'field' as a *locus* of contestation and interaction between actors with different capacities and forms of 'capital', Huysmans uses the term 'security field' to describe 'a field of security practices that is conceptualized as somewhat separated from other fields of practice; a specific concrete manifestation of the rules defining security practices' (Huysmans 2002: 44). Security is thus a domain of practices, and the definition of security problems results from the production and reproduction of practices through the social and political investment of actors, who resort to a particular security rationality to engage with particular issues.

²⁶ Paul Williams goes much in the same way when he conceives security as a fundamental element in the study of world politics: '[security] is a process as much as a condition, and throughout history this process has focused on determining the most appropriate relationship between individuals and political communities' (2004: 138).

The practical definition of security and insecurity is, therefore, the result of political actions. These actions are undertaken not only at the political level *strictu sensu*, but also, and increasingly, at the technocratic and bureaucratic levels²⁷. The importance of Huysmans' analysis for the purposes of this argument is twofold: on the one hand, it shows how the political realm, in its most simple and ordinary elements, is implicated in the constitution of domains of security and insecurity that give rise to particular constructions of threats and understandings of identity (the 'Self' of the threat); on the other hand, it allows for a sociologically deep analysis of the constitution of threats — via political actions, practices, routines and institutional interaction —, thereby denaturalizing the nature of the threat and the naturalness of certain responses. In Huysman's analysis, the logic of security (that is, the logic of fast and unchecked measures, of 'war' [2002: 57]) cannot be seen as a natural response to a reality of security 'out there in the world'²⁸; rather, this particular rationality is neither necessary nor static: it is entrenched in a symbolic and cultural order and is reproduced through practices. Thus, it can be contested and transformed²⁹.

²⁷ Huysmans follows here the Paris School of security studies, and namely the work of Didier Bigo, in conceptualizing the importance of security experts (as producers of security knowledge) and the role of institutional competition in determining, through political action, the realm of security/insecurity (see Bigo 2000 and 2002).

²⁸ The refusal of the facticity of a 'reality of security' does not mean that the challenges posed by various issues are not real, but rather that their emergence as security threats — and the set of practices that this emergence makes possible — is not self-evident and results from political processes.

²⁹ Williams has provided an analysis of the cultural order that underpins constructions of security. See in particular his analysis of the cultural politics behind the reconstitution of NATO after the Cold War, and his account of the cultural power wielded by the democratic peace thesis (Williams 2007: 43-90).

Europe's security and Europe's identity

Having argued that an understanding of the political realm in which identities are played out and negotiated cannot be understood without engaging in security concerns, this paper now moves to a more systematic exploration of the historical dilemmas surrounding the construction of a 'European identity'. With this, we hope to provide another layer to a theoretical problematization of the EU's foreign policy tools.

In this context, it is worth bearing in mind three strongly interconnected structural issues: a) the tensions and struggles between more particularistic and restrictive views on identity, and more inclusive and universal identity projects such as the EU; b) the ongoing, centuries-old politics of inclusion and exclusion of sub- and trans-national communities such as Jews, 'Gypsies' and other (migrant) minorities; and c) the encounters which took place as European nations colonized most of the world from the 15th century onwards.

The first issue has often been mentioned in background synopses of why and how the EU came into being: one is constantly told that a wide European identity has a long historical pedigree harkening back at least to earlier notions of 'Christendom', while at the same time we are constantly reminded of how destructive nationalist identity politics brought Europe to the brink of destruction in two successive World Wars. It is against this highly streamlined narrative background that most accounts of the European Union's emergence take place, as if to remind us that Europe's peace and security are inextricably bound to how successfully one can imagine and enact a unified European identity³⁰.

³⁰ For a similar argument, focusing on the importance of desecuritization in the process of canceling out the fragmentary tendencies in Europe, see Wæver (1998).

This is also the core contention of much research on regional integration, and also on the idea of ‘security communities’, which are grounded on issues of *belonging* and *recognition* — that is to say, on identity politics³¹.

Even though an in-depth engagement with the second issue — that of a wide variety of ‘strangers in our midst’, and how they have been alternately dealt with in terms of inclusion/exclusion in various visions of European identity, and securitized as both menaces and victims — is beyond the scope of this argument, it is useful to bear in mind two important elements of the debate: on the one hand, the security project of liberal modernity since at least Westphalia has been premised precisely on reducing (or restricting) the security nexus to a relationship between states who monopolize the legitimate means of violence within their territories and their rights-bearing citizens. On the other hand, there are various ‘others’ — other citizens, citizens of other states and other non-citizens in general — who do not fit this simple equation of freedom and security between states and their population, but that nonetheless have a deep impact on it. In short, this is an issue which puts us squarely in the intersection between the politics of the EU and critical security studies, and forces upon us the question ‘whose security?’, when speaking of European security policy and the EU’s foreign policy tools in general.

This brings us to the third point, concerning the ‘loud silences’ about Europe’s colonial past and the legacies it presents today’s EU with, particularly in terms of security³². To put it bluntly, although the political project of the European Union is

³¹ For a fuller treatment of identity in relation to security communities see Bially Mattern (2000 and 2001).

³² This paper recognizes that the colonial dimension is very much present in the domestic sphere of various EU member-states. However, the implications of the colonial past are, it is argued, still unaddressed in what comes to discussions and decision-making processes at the level of European institutions.

(today, at any rate) the sturdy child of a post-colonial world under American hegemony, European foreign policy is structurally shaped in particular ways by virtue of its long history of colonization. This happens in two, strongly interrelated, ways: firstly, it is undeniable that, geographically, the areas of greater concern in terms of the EU's foreign aid and security interventions have been the collective former colonies or dependencies of EU's members: from the Balkans, through large swathes of Africa and Latin America, to the Middle East and a few spots in Asia. This truism is usually corroborated by many references — explicit and implicit — to the “historical responsibility” of European nations towards the development of their former colonies. Therefore, the *why and where* of Europe's security interventions is largely shaped by a shared European identity as (former) colonizer.

However, and of greater interest perhaps, the second way in which Europe's identity and its colonial past are linked is far subtler but equally powerful — perhaps even more so. In order to understand this, one must turn the previous insight on its head: not only are European security practices the product of a historically contextual identity as a colonizing power, they also seek to (re)produce a particular kind of identity outside Europe. The promotion of peaceful resolution to conflicts, the expansion and deepening of market economies, the promotion of regimes of governance based on democratic standards, the preoccupation with fostering security sector reforms leading to post-colonial states achieving Western standards of the monopoly over the legitimate means of violence, as well as the emphasis on centralized, strong institutions to regulate social life (judicial system, national police forces, professional national armies, strong parliaments) are all part of the liberal modern ‘package deal’ which the EU actively seeks to export, particularly when it intervenes abroad. This is, by all means, no longer a regime of colonial administration whereby this ‘reforms package’ would have been

forcefully instituted within an imperial, hierarchical setting — nor do all EU member-states share a common colonial background³³. However, this project bears some resemblance to some underlying drives in colonial practices, and specifically to the colonial urge to develop ‘backward peoples’ until they are ‘fit for self-rule’, in order to achieve greater security both in the colony and the metropolis. Indeed, the post-colonial trend to increasingly link security to development — development, that is, of a particular kind of liberal identity in political, economic and social life leading to predictable, recognizable, orderly and modern behavior — is perhaps one of the most significant developments of international society, and one with deep and far reaching implications, as has been consistently argued by Mark Duffield³⁴.

Thus, the *how* of Europe’s security interventions (and large components of its foreign policy) is shaped by its urge to foster a particular liberal modern understanding of politics, with its attendant identity and behavior.

*Identity and security: the uses of the Other(s)*³⁵

Given the centrality of identity issues to the foreign and security policies of the EU, it has become commonplace to speak of the relation between security and identity in terms of a binary and fairly straightforward self/other relationship, where a (usually capitalized) Other is perceived as either friend or foe. Clearly the

³³ A word of thanks to Andrea Fleschenberg for having pointed out this important, cautionary nuance.

³⁴ See, in particular, Duffield (2001a, 2002 and 2005) Without focusing specifically in the EU’s external interventions, Duffield (2001b) is also worth paying attention to.

³⁵ The apt phrase was coined by Iver B. Neumann, in a book analyzing the practices historically constituting European identity (1999).

picture is much more complex³⁶: there are not only many uses of/for the Other, but also many ways in which otherness is made to work in security discourses and practices, within a variety of historically specific contexts. It is also worth making reference to two broad dimensions or axes in which practices of othering — both discursive and otherwise — have been variously deployed in the context of the post-Cold War, and especially post-9/11, European foreign and security policy.

The first is the internal dimension, in which migration has increasingly been the object upon which security discourses, programmes and technologies are brought to bear on the part of both the EU as a whole and its member states, a factor which has had immense impact on the development of internal security institutions, and also in the European neighborhood and enlargement policies³⁷. In addition to this, and often linked to it, the issue of Islamic minorities residing in Europe has been a site of contestation in the framework of the recent ‘war on terror’, and the variegated practices of othering and securitization associated with it have impacted not only internally, but also transnationally on Europe’s security policies. Nonetheless, although part and parcel of the same story of security and identity in Europe, these issues of “internal othering” are beyond the remit of this argument, and we must therefore turn to the main axis, that of the international dimension.

Here, two sets of identity issues appear to dominate the agenda: on the one hand, those areas and populations that are

³⁶ For a discussion of self/other relations and European identity, see Rumelili (2004).

³⁷ See for instance Huysmans (2006). On the EU neighborhood policy — a complex field of security and development practices that runs parallel to the European interventions abroad explored in the current volume — a veritable cottage industry of studies has emerged. For an introductory overview, albeit very critical, see Smith (2005).

identified as in need of development; on the other hand, the oscillating relationship between Europe and the US. But how do these relate to identity concerns in general, and with practices of othering in particular?

First of all, the growing tensions which have increasingly characterized the transatlantic relationship since the end of the Cold War are a defining feature of the contemporary European security identity. In fact, one can argue that mounting perceptions of wide divergence between European and American values in world politics have been a driving force that has structured European foreign and security practices. On this issue, it is worth quoting Ted Hopf at length, in a recent article reviewing the trend:

Europe's material and ideological power uniquely situates it as the closest ally of the US and its most effective potential competitor in global politics. Because of the identity shared by Europe and the US, the disappearance of the Soviet threat did not mean the end of the European-US alliance. But the absence of an obviously contrary Other, Soviet Communism, has resulted in an increasing differentiation between European social democracy and American liberalism. (...) US unilateralism is both accelerating the process of identity differentiation and pushing European institutionalization in an anti-American direction. The new threat from terrorism, in part because the US defines it as such, and also because it is so closely bound to American unipolar primacy and relations with Israel, turns out to separate Europe from the US in the face of this threat, rather than unite it against a common enemy (2004: 13).

As can be inferred from the discussion in the first two sections of this article, the EU's emerging security doctrine — and its underlying security identity — as a civilian and normative power has been in many cases driven by a need to differentiate itself

from that of the US, to show a security doctrine with a more ‘humane’ face. In this equation, America’s unilateralist otherness is constantly put to use in order to stabilise the *we-ness* of European security policy — although this is by no means a smooth or uniform process, as the rifts regarding the Iraq war (particularly the issue of “old” versus “new” Europe) amply illustrate. In any case, it would seem that the European Union, in its official policy pronouncements, rather than taking offence at the suggestion — in Robert Kagan’s controversial and hugely influential book, *Of Paradise and Power* (2003) — that ‘Americans are from Mars, Europeans are from Venus’, has sought to mobilize this image of a ‘softer’ European identity in order to forge an alternative vision of its security mission abroad, while at the same time crystallizing a common European identity in opposition to America.

Secondly, Europe — much like the US and most other Western, liberal, capitalist states — tends in the first instance to define its foreign policy agenda, and security interventions in particular, by identifying those conflictual and/or underdeveloped Others who are seen as the origin of insecurity. Increasingly, security threats are defined less in terms of the possibility of armed aggression by other states, and more as spill-over effects resulting from problems within states. In this formulation, post-Cold War threats mostly assume the form of dangerous flows — of illegal immigrants, weapons, drugs, transnational crime, terrorists³⁸ — and they are seen to originate from places whose main problem is the *lack of governance*. Security is therefore seen as a matter of regulating or stopping such flows, essentially eliminating such ‘ungoverned spaces’ from whence the threats originate. The solution, it is often argued, is to achieve governance over these Others so that they become more like us, living in a state of well-ordered freedom and prosperity. In other words, in this view, European

³⁸ In this context, see Andreas and Price (2001).

security depends on *identifying* the sources of this dangerous otherness and its behavior and transforming it, rendering it *identical* to the EU's setting.

Thus, European security policies — and arguably the EU's foreign policy in general — are not solely the result of an interplay of security-identity concerns with a long history. They must also be seen as sets of techniques and practices (including discursive practices) which are brought to bear on, and aim to structurally (re)produce, a particular kind of subjectivity, a particular identity (or set of identities), and particular forms of political life, which this chapter has labelled as *modern liberal*. Therefore, (European) security interventions — of the kind discussed by the various contributors to this volume — are *both* the consequence of a constructed and contested politics of European identity *and* seek to foster a similarly liberal identity upon others — both states and populations — that are objects and subjects of Europe's modernist developmental drive. Additionally, these issues are used to foster a particular identity and sense of mission³⁹ in Europe itself.

Conclusions

The EU's foreign and security policies — particularly in situations of conflict-related intervention — can best be understood as constructed and implemented in response, implicit or explicit, to a host of *identity* issues which have a long history. Therefore, European security practices are inherently political and clearly seek to effect governance, and a specific variant thereof, through

³⁹ Additionally, it may also reflect a search for “windows of opportunity” in order for the EU to increase international status (externally) and acquire more capabilities (internally). We thank Laura Ferreira Pereira for bringing this to our attention.

security. This terrain is, we suggest, deeply contested and contestable: placing the emphasis on the political and sociological context in which security is conceived and realized in practice, and recognizing that security and politics are intertwined in theoretical understandings and practical decisions undertaken by particular actors, allows for the introduction of a normative element into the equation. There are no ineluctable conditions at the heart of European politics; rather, the definition of threats and appropriate responses — that is, the level of security practices in the security field — can be politically questioned and reclaimed.

What are the implications of these theoretical insights to the study of European foreign policy and to an understanding of its claims to global actorness?

1. Foreign policy is articulated with the domestic realm in the sense that it is a reflection of a drive for certainty, calculability and stability. Foreign policy must therefore be seen as an instrument for the constitution of a (tendentiously) univocal and fixed identity. In the case of the EU, this situation is particularly acute at the levels of bureaucratic and institutional reproduction — political fields of practices that contribute to the creation of domains of security and insecurity.
2. The EU's foreign policy tools reflect the securitary impulse for control and normalization of the outside realm. In this context, the enlargement policy and the Copenhagen criteria are particularly interesting because they are instruments through which the 'Other' of Europe is tamed and neutralized into the 'Self'. This is particularly evident in the contestations about Europe's neighborhood and how to deal with it, including and going beyond the ENP.
3. The struggle for *certainty* and *calculability* is, as Wæver (1998) argued, also a struggle of the EU against its own

past. One of the strongest impetuses for integration and for the spill-over of supranational cooperation to the realm of security and defense policies has been the fear of a halt in the European project that could eventually lead to a profound crisis. In this sense, the neighborhood is problematic because it functions like a mirror of the EU's fears of its own past of 'balkanization' — a revealing metaphor that connects fragmentation with chaos and ungovernability.

4. In close tandem with points (1) and (2) above, the ensemble of programs and practices that compose the security policy of the EU must be seen as efforts to *effect governance at the margins of Europe*, thus promoting, in ever-expanding circles, a particular form of community, a particular form of political life which can be epigraphically summarized as liberal. This has a double function: governing through security promotes a) the stabilization and normalization of other peoples and territories abroad which are seen as the origins of dangerous flows capable of threatening the EU; and b) in a mirroring effect, (re)produces a stable European identity.
5. Security policies, whilst ultimately reflecting identity traits, are also dependent on political decisions and normative choices. The definition of security concerns and appropriate responses is political by nature and is produced and reproduced through political actions, be they top-down governmental or bureaucratic and technocratic. In other words, their definition is contingent and open to change.

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Two unequal partners: the EU and its Russian neighbor

MARIA RAQUEL FREIRE⁴⁰

Introduction

It is relevant to clarify the relationship between the European Union (EU) and its largest neighbor, the Russian Federation by identifying competing interests and cooperation opportunities as well as to analyze the agendas of these distinct actors, focusing particularly on issues of security and stability, if we are to understand the EU's eastern neighborhood policy. The promotion of a genuine partnership between the EU and Russia, built on a solid basis regarding principles, instruments and objectives, is seen as a possible contribution to the stabilization of the former Soviet space, including Russia itself. However variables of competition, affirmation and reassurance are defined side-by-side in this equation of partnership with those of cooperation and concession, and the resulting calculus is hard to make.

The aim of this paper is therefore twofold: first, to understand the scope of the so-called EU-Russia partnership in terms of agreed procedures and commitments and practical imple-

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mentation; and second, to extend the analysis of this relationship to the management of conflicts in the former Soviet space. The complexity of the former Soviet area's conflictuality, with intra-state disputes and inter-state conflicts, which cross political-economic and ethno-cultural boundaries, and incite neighboring rivalries, render this enlarged Europe a puzzle of many different pieces. The way in which Russia, an actor with both added leverage power in the area and well-identified interests, and the EU, through the furthering of its involvement, act and react to instability and conflict in the area is an expression of their commitments and approaches. And this has not always been in line or coincident, and often reveals distrust and uncompromising attitudes. Mismanagements in a relationship that do not augur well for the promotion of stability in this enlarged Europe.

The EU-Russia relationship: adjusting strategies?

The post-Cold War order offered new rules for the international game and adjustments therefore had to be made to the new conditions. In this new setting, the Union has increasingly gained relevance and international capacity to act in external affairs, while Russia has been through a transformative process which has allowed it renewed confidence and the gradual reaffirmation of its power and influence. The EU as a security community shares a set of values and norms built on an encompassing and multilateral approach to security issues, from which benefit-driven outputs are both an end and a self-sustaining factor, both for the Union and also for the promotion of security in its vicinity. By a process of gradual socialization of security approaches, i.e. a set of norms and values allowing an approximation to EU policies and ways of dealing, the EU's "normative model" (Youngs, 2002: 103;

Walker, 2001: 78) has increasingly been “exported” as a strategy to foster stability in its neighborhood.

However, and regarding Russia as its largest neighbor, this has not been a linear process. In fact, Russia has been resisting this *Europeanization* process,⁴¹ restraining from socializing a security conceptualization that it wants to be its own. This has been apparent in its reticence towards the Wider Europe proposal and in its practices at home, taking an independent and uncomfortable position to what it describes as external interferences. Thus, Russia would like to see a process where a true partnership based on equality principles would be rendered operational and become the engine for EU-Russia collaboration in various domains. “[W]e frankly warned our partners: should this add up to a new issue of the concept of buffer states, or ‘limitrofs’, which first appeared 100 years ago, nothing will come of it, as history has already shown us” (Chizhov, 2004: 85). The institutionalization of a relationship based on regular contacts and the signing of agreements, has not been accompanied by the clear sharing of values and principles on policy procedures. Russia has been resisting this *Europeanization* process, refraining from adopting a security conceptualization that it wants to be its own.

The Union strategy towards Russia is built on the principle of the stabilization of its neighborhood, through the development of a constructive bilateral relationship with the authorities in Moscow. Therefore, the EU recognizes Russia as a special place in its neighborhood, in such a way that it does not include the Russian Federation in its Neighborhood Policy package. Despite applying similar procedures and mechanisms to Russia to those envisaged in the Union’s Neighborhood Policy, the fact of dealing with Russia in a separate framing demonstrates the relevance and

⁴¹ For an interesting analysis of the concept of “Europeanization” see Jorgensen, 2004: 48-50. For the EU relationship with its neighbors see Dannreuther (ed.), 2004.

weight Russian politics and actions have and the recognition of this by the Union's member states.

As for Russia, the Soviet imperial logic is still very present in its foreign policy: a logic of affirmation and regaining of influence. In this process, the contours of the EU-Russia agenda become tremulous. The values gap, the underlying norm setting differentiation, and the distinct understanding about (un)democratic practices render a common understanding about security and stability difficult. Dialogue seems in many instances replaced by bilateral monologues with Russian accusations of interference in its internal affairs and EU uneasiness about Russian practices at home and in neighboring countries. The mixing of cooperative and competitive policies and approaches confers an interesting dimension to this relation: both acknowledge the relevance of the other, the strategic benefits arising from mutual understanding, and the possible gains from collaboration, not only for the two but for regional and global stability. But they also acknowledge deep differences in understandings and approaches. In this context, there are no tight framing guidelines for the EU-Russia relationship and they are not defined to suit.

From a “strategic relationship” to a “strategic partnership”?

The EU and Russia are two unequal partners, different actors with different agendas, not always easy to reconcile. On the one hand the EU is a regional organization with 27 member states, built on democratic principles, a multi-level decision-making system where individual interests do not necessarily coincide with the collective, particularly on foreign policy issues; on the other, the Russian Federation is a large country with a unified policy and well defined political, strategic and economic interests, based

on a strong hand at home and tough stance towards foreign issues considered vital to Russian interests, pursued in many instances outside the traditional contours of democratic practices. These disparities in cohesion and internal political unity, as in the means to achieve them, have resulted in difficulties in the building of a strategic partnership between the two sides.

The basis for this “strategic partnership” was set in June 1999 with the launching of the EU Common Strategy on Russia (expressing a formal attempt to upgrade the status of this relationship), as a way of responding to the mounting tensions that shadowed it, with the Chechen issue and former Yugoslavia at the top of the discord. It represents the most consistent effort at coordination of European policies and programs towards Russia, defining objectives as well as drawing immediate priorities for action. The political message is evident: a stable Russia governed by democratic principles at the EU borders.

Moscow responded in October of the same year with the adoption of a document about the Medium Term Strategy for Development of Relations with the European Union.⁴² The document aims at assuring national interests and expands the image of Russia in Europe as a reliable partner in the building of a system of collective security, while mobilizing the potential and experience of the EU in the promotion of the Russian market economy and in the development of democratic processes in the country. In addition, it envisages strategic cooperation in the prevention and search for solution to local conflicts, with emphasis on international law and peaceful means. In this way, it envisages a unified Europe, without dividing lines, and the balanced and integrated strengthening of the positions of the Russian Federation and Europe regarding the most pressing issues affecting the international community in the new century. According to the

⁴² www.eur.ru/eng/neweur/user_eng.php?func=apage&id=53.

document, the proposed objectives are in line with the European strategy towards Russia.

However, if at first sight the two documents seem to be in alignment, a closer analysis reveals after all some misalignment. The “EU focuses on values and Russia’s need to change profoundly, while the Russian document stresses national interests and sovereignty. The CSR [Common Strategy on Russia] is vague, while the Russian strategy is quite specific” (Lynch, 2003: 59), revealing the pragmatic and realist tone Russian foreign policy has been assuming. This distant way of formulating guiding principles remains very present in the EU-Russia relationship, showing both the distance in the underlying conceptualizations about values and norms and the difficulties in understanding the “other”. The complex EU structure and multi-level decision-making dynamics render it an opaque partner, while the Russian way of formulating policies and its precarious commitment to many international principles shows its obscure side. Difficulties in understanding that persist in time.

Putin’s Russia assumed clearly realist traces, recognizing its weaknesses and searching for the revitalization of the state, with September 11 proving itself as an accelerator of this trend (Lynch, 2003: 9). The concrete realization that Russia could not do much in the face of inevitable developments, such as EU and NATO enlargement, made Russia change its discourse since direct confrontation could poison its relationship with the West and lead to isolation and consequently add to the country’s fragility. Putin realized the fundamental link between the internal and external dimensions was essential for the building of stability in Russia. The 2001 terrorist attacks and the global fight against terror were used by the Russian president in this search for realignment with the West, and in reaffirmation of its international political status as promoter of decision and influence in international politics. “Integration processes, in particular, in the Euro-Atlantic region

are quite often pursued on a selective and limited basis. Attempts to belittle the role of a sovereign state as the fundamental element of international relations generate a threat of arbitrary interference in internal affairs”,⁴³ to which Putin responded in his usual cool and pragmatic way, underlining the potential role of Russia as a regional power.

There seems to be a clear recognition by the authorities in Moscow that the Russian geostrategic power is under threat. This feeling of vulnerability, with concrete justification in the wider involvement of other actors in its neighboring area, generally described as a traditional area of Russian influence, explains the Russian collaborative approach. It is a way of preserving international security, according to the Russian model, signing accords and defining the level of western engagement in the former Soviet space, which Russia only acquiesces to when convenient. The EU has, thus, been following a policy of influence over Russian internal developments through the definition of concessions and bargains in the face of shared interests and objectives. A policy of “giving, but”, which intends to pressure Russia on delicate matters, in particular regarding human rights and democratization, through the introduction of conditionality elements.

In this context, the European Neighborhood Policy might be understood as a policy of rapprochement between the EU and Russia. Firstly drafted as a Communication by the European Commission about an enlarged Europe in March 2003 and further consolidated in July of the same year,⁴⁴ it offers cooperation in

⁴³ *The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, 28 June 2000.

⁴⁴ Communication from the Commission, *Wider Europe Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, COM (2003) 104, 11 March 2003; Communication from the Commission, *Paving the Way for a New Neighbourhood Instrument: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours*, 1 July 2003.

three particular areas: political, human, civil and cultural; security; and sustainable economic and social development, aiming at the establishment of a “ring of solidarity” in the EU borders. Russia has, however, been showing little enthusiasm about this wider Europe proposal, since Moscow does not envisage more than a special relationship with the EU. It wants ability to maneuver in its near abroad⁴⁵ and understands this neighborhood policy as possibly having a direct implication on its interests in the former Soviet area.

In May 2004 a “Strategy Paper” was approved defining closer collaboration between the Union and its neighbors, and including the drafting of “Country Reports” with a bilateral character and according to the most pressing needs of each of these countries, reflecting the political, economic, social and institutional situation in these countries as a basis for the definition of Action Plans. These “suited to fit” Action Plans aim at bridging the differences between needs and capabilities, establishing concrete and simultaneously ambitious targets in distinct areas for an integrated development of each of these partners, particularly in the process of political-economic and democratic transition. According to EU sources, these measures allow the building of an enlarged area of stability and security on the basis of confidence and the sharing of common values, eventually allowing more efficacy in the combat against the new menaces, particularly terrorism and organized crime. However, “an Action Plan with Russia would only be part of the overall ‘strategic partnership’, which includes the Energy Dialogue and talks on a Common European Economic Space. It is unlikely that Russia will agree to a national Action Plan on the lines proposed, precisely because it would lead to

⁴⁵ Term first used by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev in January 1992 to refer to the Russian neighbours, more generally the former Soviet space. See Sprüds, 2004: 32.

greater EU engagement and, therefore, interference in Russian affairs (sectoral action plans might however be possible)” (Lynch, 2003a: 55).

At the Moscow Summit on 10 May 2005, an agreement on four common spaces was signed. Its goal was to build a Europe without dividing lines, built around four areas of cooperation, including a common economic space; a common space of liberty, security and justice; a common space of cooperation in the field of external security; and a common space of research, education and culture. It is a non-binding agreement which aims at the creation of a common market between the EU and Russia without barriers to trade. Cooperation is envisaged in financial services, transport, communications, energy and environment, as well as on humanitarian and security issues. Together with the neighborhood principles and the EU Security Strategy, these are described as the “defining expression of EU policy towards the Russian Federation”.⁴⁶ But these principles need to be translated into concrete actions. A goal difficult to attain when themes of discord remain, hampering rapprochement between Moscow and Brussels and giving these commitments thus far not much more than minimal practical translation.

The stalemate in the negotiations of a new accord to replace the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement due to expire on 1st December 2007 is a reflex of dissension. The almost certain automatic renewal of the existing agreement, as it stands, has been interpreted as a negative sign (see Arbatova 2006; Likhachev 2006; Bordachev 2006; Emerson et al. 2006). On the one hand, it signals Russia’s unwillingness to negotiate a new accord, which it understands as contrary to its interests, especially regarding energetic issues; on the other hand, it highlights the reticent

⁴⁶ Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013: Russian Federation, http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/russia/csp/index.htm.

posture of the EU in drawing a new model for the relationship with Moscow. The very limited results of the Samara EU-Russia Summit (May 2007) further adds to a toughened discourse by president Putin, matched with concrete moves, leaving the strains in this bilateral relationship clear.

The Russian unilateral withdrawal from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe,⁴⁷ together with the announcement of an eventual retreat from the INF Treaty (Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces), in a context of high international tension, is not promising. With delicate issues on the agenda, including the anti-missile defense shield, the eternal question about NATO enlargement and the even more enduring issue of (dis)respect for human rights and democratic principles, along with disagreement over Kosovo and the Litvinienko case (extradition of Andrei Lugovoi), the Russian moves are not surprising. However, the discourse about a new cold war seems exaggerated in the face of mutual recognition of the relevance of a cooperative relationship. These moves have, nevertheless, an enduring consequence regarding the implied lack of confidence and trust.

There is ample recognition in Brussels that Russia's leverage power in the former Soviet area, albeit diminished, is still considerable. Despite the colorful revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, and of wider involvement by international actors in the area, Russia's political-economic and military presence and influence are noticeable. Its acknowledged involvement, at times through consent and on occasion sideline pressure, render it a powerful actor in the former Soviet space. This applies to ongoing intrastate conflicts in Moldova or Georgia, and to the Karabakh dispute, between Armenia and Azerbaijan, along with much disputed energy resources and

⁴⁷ CFE II, a revised version of the CFE Treaty agreed at Istanbul in 1999, has only been ratified by four countries: Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

distribution. And in fact, energy issues and crisis management have been at the top of the agenda.

While the EU sees Russia as a privileged partner, when looking at an unstable Middle East, it also understands that the diversification of energy sources is essential, particularly due to Russian assertive and retaliatory practices in the former Soviet area which have a direct impact on the European markets.⁴⁸ Enhanced contacts between Brussels and countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia, in line with its policy of energy diversification, have been received in Russia with apprehension, as maneuvers for further EU involvement in its natural area of influence, and as inciting hostile movements within this area and diminishing Moscow's leverage power. In addition, Russia understands that while further integration in the European markets gives it assurances and guarantees of stability, but raises questions about a market that remains very much closed to non-energy assets (Freire, 2007).

Crisis management has also been an issue of relevance, particularly in the face of increased EU involvement in the former Soviet space. Although not formally a mediator, the EU has become involved in the negotiations process for a peaceful settlement of the Moldova-Transnistria dispute as an observer to the negotiations, and by active engagement: at the request of Moldova and Ukraine, it deployed a Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM), in June 2005 as a measure of confidence-building between the parties. It has also been more proactive in Georgia where the Rule of Law Mission (EUJUST THEMIS) has contributed to institution-building, and more generally to the stabilization of the country. A gradual enhanced presence of the EU within the ENP framework, with Russian consent and at times dissent.

⁴⁸ Cuts in the gas flows to Ukraine in January 2006 and oil supplies to Belarus in January 2007, are examples.

Thus, the policy of inclusion pursued by the EU towards Russia intends to bridge differences and foster rapprochement in approaches so that common wording might be possible between such differentiated actors. And this includes the sharing of understanding about democratization, security and stability as a fundamental point of departure for addressing conflictuality and other sources of instability in the former Soviet area. The civil dimension combined with strong economic measures is a fundamental piece in the democratic puzzle and in the building of stability to which the EU might contribute in a positive way.

Conclusion

In this relationship, the conducting of dialogue and the implementation of initiatives must be sufficiently clear to dismiss Russian fears about EU enlargement, which have risen with the diminution of Moscow's power on the world stage. Neither side sees its interests as best served by excluding the other, but they also realize the need to deepen cooperation. President Putin has mentioned the need to improve the efficiency and quality of this cooperation (Lynch, 2003: 18). But always from a realist perspective: whenever vital Russian interests might be in some way under threat, Moscow does not cooperate. Thus, interest, compromise and rational calculation of opportunities and benefits underlie cooperation.

The EU-Russia strategic relationship is slowly giving place to a strategic partnership, built on little consensus but aiming at great achievements. The ambiguities inherent to this partnership, in which the conciliation of interests is not always easy, are a reflex of the need to balance costs and gains, in an equation where the sharing of borders, benefits and threats frame this neighborly relation.

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Shaping EU-South Caucasus relations
through strategic patterns:
energy and conflicts in perspective

LICÍNIA SIMÃO⁴⁹

Introduction

The South Caucasus states — Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia — share a highly disrupted regional space with three “frozen” armed conflicts: two in the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia; and an inter-state conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. The Caucasian region also stands as a bridge linking energy-rich Caspian and Central Asian regions to energy-demanding Europe. The conflicts have been recognised by the European Union (EU) as a priority from a political and security perspective, and an area where the EU should and could do more (EC, 2004a: 11 and EC, 2006d: 4). Regional cooperation, despite being considered a priority by external actors, faces major obstacles first and foremost due to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Georgia was deprived for a long time of effective control of its border with Russia and Turkey due to the Abkhaz conflict and the Adjara leaders’ *de*

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facto rule until 2004⁵⁰. An embargo on Georgian products has been imposed by Moscow since 2006, as well as closure of borders and suspension of flights and postal connections between the two countries. Armenia, on the other hand has been excluded from regional transport and energy developments due to the ongoing Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

This paper assesses the role EU plays in the South Caucasus, through its Neighborhood Policy, sketching an overview of its instruments and priorities in conflict management and energetic security. It is meant to present a picture of current engagement by juxtaposition to previous efforts of cooperation with the region, while looking to identify strategic interests and value-driven approaches within the ENP.

Interplay of strategic challenges in the EU's neighborhood

The security context of Europe has changed profoundly since the end of the Cold war, and with it the perceptions of what role the European Union can play in expanding stability and security throughout a unified European continent. The collapse of the Soviet Union put an end to the most direct military threat to Europe, but also brought about new challenges and new perceptions of what regional insecurity could entail: political and economic instability in the new independent states; ethno-political conflict in the Balkans and the Caucasus; and a myriad of spill over effects that, as globalization processes developed, became more complex and urgent. These chal-

⁵⁰ See map on Annex 1. Georgian authorities have regained control of the Sarp/Sarpi crossing point on the border with Turkey in Adjara, after 2004, but the road and rail links to Russia, through Abkhazia are under control of the Abkhaz authorities. For more information see Güldenkin, (2005: 100-101) and ICG (2006a: 15).

lenges led the EU to focus on regional integration through enlargement to the Central and Eastern European countries, and also on its normative and civilian character perceived as a central feature of its approach to security (Manners, 2002; Smith, 2004). Through multilateralism and regulation of international relations, the EU looks to address the root causes of conflict and instability in a comprehensive approach. The September 11 attacks seemed to confirm the need for such an encompassing framework to security, and thus set the ground for Europe's engagement in defining itself as a *sui generis* security actor, on a global level (Biscop, 2004: 6).

The development of a European strategic concept of security was an important step to give coherence and meaning to EU external policies, identifying major threats and priority areas where action should be more prompt. The European Security Strategy, approved by the European Council of December 2003, states clearly the importance of the neighborhood of the enlarged EU for stability inside the Union, making explicit mention of the South Caucasus (ESS, 2003:8). This was a turning point both for the EU and the South Caucasus, setting the ground for a closer relation on security and ending the devolution of responsibilities in the EU's neighborhood to Russia or the United States (US) (Danreuther, 2006: 184). This coincided with US growing unilateralism and return to a balance of power and militarist approach to international relations — what Tassinari (2007: 3, 6) calls a *modern* and *Westphalian* understanding of international relations — leading to the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, while Europe's response to terrorism underlined the root causes triggering these phenomena and therefore demanded deeper relations with these regions where religious radicalism, poverty and underdevelopment mix — what can be called a *neo-medieval* (Tassinari, 2007: 6) or *post-modern* stance in international relations (Cooper, 2003: 26).

The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) is thus defined as part of a larger strategy aiming to give the EU the necessary framework and the means to cope with insecurity and instability. The ENP addresses regions bordering the enlarged EU⁵¹ and represents a hybrid form of external policy, cross-cutting through the inter-pillar system, drawing on communitarian instruments such as European Commission (EC) assistance, or Justice and Home Affairs cooperation, and CFSP and ESDP⁵² instruments when necessary. The neighborhood represents in this sense a multiple challenge where different levels of threats combine to create instability: conflicts, radicalism, illegal trafficking and proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, frail domestic institutions, and corrupted and authoritarian regimes (Balfour and Missiroli, 2007: 25-27). Not least, the Eastern neighbors stand at a privileged route for energy resources to flow towards Europe. All this testifies the need for coherent efforts within the EU institutions, as acknowledged by the Commission (EC, 2006c: 2 and EC, 2004b: 3, 10).

The South Caucasus stands as a clear-cut example of these security challenges but, adding more complexity to any policy directed at the region, it also stands at the civilizational brink of Europe, bordering Asian, Islamic, Turkic and Persian cultures in a fuzzy area where the European identity is constantly redefined. An analysis of EU relations with the South Caucasus countries will follow focusing on the challenges posed by existing conflicts and

⁵¹ There are 16 countries included in the ENP: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Russia chose to continue cooperation with the EU in the framework of the four common spaces, though it is included in the financial instrument designed for the neighborhood, the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

⁵² CFSP stands for Common Foreign and Security Policy, and ESDP stands for European Security and Defense Policy.

the EU's energy needs. To what extent have strategic considerations marked EU's approach to the region and how far have they sustained its claim to be a "different" global actor?

*EU-South Caucasus relations deepening
and widening in the ENP framework*

International understanding of post-Soviet Eurasia has been gradually moving from a "Russia-first" approach, to greater interplay with the independent states of Eurasia, both at the bilateral and regional level. In 1998 the first Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCA) between EU and Ukraine and Moldova entered into force, and one year later with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan⁵³. The PCA are legal agreements to regulate political, economic and trade relations but do not configure deeper political relations, since the EU was unable and unwilling to embrace such a distant and complex region in its emerging foreign policy. The ENP represents a qualitative step in bilateral relations with these independent states, implementing much of the conditionality and socialisation strategies previously applied, though the prospect of membership is not included. It stands as an attempt to develop a differentiated approach towards its neighbors, based on individual tailor-made Action Plans reflecting "different geographical locations, the political and economic situation, relations with the EU and the neighbouring countries

⁵³ The EU negotiated with Belarus a PCA that was never ratified and implemented due to the deep disagreements with President Lukashenka's moves to authoritarianism. The Central Asian republics of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan had operational PCA in 1999, but Turkmenistan's is still pending ratification from EU member states and the European Parliament, while Tajikistan only negotiated a PCA with the EU in 2004 that is still pending ratification by member states.

reform programs, [...] needs and capabilities as well as perceived interests in the context of the ENP” (EC, 2004a: 8). This framework has been revealing insufficient conceptual clarity as to what the ENP offers, at a time when the EU normative base is increasingly challenged by strategic considerations in its neighborhood.

An overarching strategic Western interest has developed towards Eurasia due to conflict-related instability and its energy reserves. With a view to diversifying its energy resources, the EU and the US have put their efforts to channel the Caspian energy towards Western markets. Although with more limited resources than the Persian Gulf or the Middle East, this region is strategically located in the European periphery and important in its diversification efforts. Therefore, the engagement with Western-led institutions such as the EU, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) can be seen as a mutually supportive strategy to stabilize and develop the regions surrounding the EU. The South Caucasus stands as a bridge connecting European markets to Central Asian energy and an important transit route, bypassing Russia and thus diminishing EU dependence on Russian energy. Nevertheless, only in 2004, did the EU assume a greater role and a pro-active stance, by including the three South Caucasus countries into the ENP.

Approaches on conflict resolution: adding meat to the bones

The development of the necessary instruments for conflict resolution has been slowly entering the EU’s institutional and political landscape. The creation of the post of High Representative for the CFSP in the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997 and the establishment of the Helsinki Headline Goals in 1999 are examples of the development of greater political and military capabili-

ties. Furthermore, a predominantly civilian perspective to conflict resolution has been underlined in the Feira Headline Goals of 2000 and in the development of a Stability Pact for South East Europe. The success of the EU approach has been facilitated in areas where the membership perspective is real, but more limited where it does not exist. Though the ENP does not offer membership perspectives to partner countries, it hopes to create the bases for political and economic development conducive to peace. The participation in the EU internal market and an enhanced political dialogue, as well as the streamlining of economic and financial assistance according to Action Plan priorities has added coherence to the EU's regional approach (Cameron and Balfour, 2007: 17), though the impact on altering conflict dynamics is far from being so clear. Relations with Russia and the US have also grown strained, hampering coordination in conflict resolution efforts.

The South Ossetian conflict has been perceived as more easily solvable for a number of reasons and one where EU engagement has been prioritised since 2003 (Popescu, 2007: 16). Since 1997 the European Commission has disbursed over €7.5 million for rehabilitation projects run by the OSCE, mostly aimed at creating bridges between the Ossetian and Georgian communities and supporting formats where the two sides could work together to reach common solutions (ICG, 2004: 20). Because of its growing financial and economic visibility the EU managed to guarantee a place at the Joint Control Commission⁵⁴ economic meetings. However, the somewhat positive impact of this assistance has had little effect in settling the final status of South Ossetia (Lynch, 2004: 31). The appointment in 2003 of a EU Special Representative (EUSR) for the South Caucasus (OJL, 2003) and the deployment of a Rule of Law Mission in

⁵⁴ The Joint Control Commission comprises Georgia, South Ossetia, Russia and North Ossetia as a conflict settlement format.

Georgia, EUJUST Themis (OJL, 2004) were important steps in reinforcing EU activities on the ground, making it more visible and coherent in its approach. The mandate of the EUSR is particularly relevant for conflict resolution and its role seems to be having a positive impact on developing a permanent interlocutor between the region and the EU⁵⁵.

Due to its protracted and distinct ethnic character the Abkhaz conflict represents a complex situation: there are deeply rooted political claims; widespread violence and animosity has led to hundreds of thousands of IDP's and Refugees; and there is very limited interaction between the Georgian and the Abkhaz communities (ICG, 2006a). The level of influence of the Georgian state in Abkhazia is very limited, as the widespread use of Russian language, Russian Rouble and Russian passports by the Abkhaz attests (Wennmann, 2006: 16). Furthermore, the large presence of Russian military in the region under the aegis of the Commonwealth of Independent States peacekeeping mandate has made separatist claims harder to counterbalance by Tbilisi. This has also made the EU reluctant to engage in political negotiations leading to conflict settlement; the lead has been left to France, Germany and the United Kingdom which are part of the UN Group of Friends of the Secretary General on Georgia. A greater involvement of the EU in Abkhazia has become hostage, on the one hand to the possibility of counter action by Russia, and on the other to the fact that the EU can in the end legitimise these secessionist movements by engaging directly with the separatist authorities (Popescu, 2007: 20).

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict presents an added level of complexity since it involves the independent states of Armenia

⁵⁵ The EUSR has become a coordinating figure of EU policies aimed at the South Caucasus, bringing coherence between EC assistance and the Council political commitments.

and Azerbaijan and the authorities in Stepanakert (capital of Nagorno-Karabakh). Furthermore, politico-military support from both Russia and Turkey — acting as patron-states — made them active parties to the conflict. Since the cease-fire agreement in 1994, no peaceful resolution has been achieved and the present *status quo* is being maintained against international attempts to mediate a solution within the OSCE Minsk Group. Azerbaijan holds no diplomatic ties with Armenia and an economic embargo has been imposed by Turkey as an act of solidarity with Baku. By including both Armenia and Azerbaijan in the ENP, the EU assumed that relations with these states would have to address the conflict, though not necessarily making it a priority. The EU does not attempt to take over the negotiation formats, left to the OSCE and the Minsk Group; it has assumed a more visible and active role through the work of the EUSR and by linking development of the region to the peaceful resolution of conflicts in official speech and documents. Nevertheless, pressing issues such as the recognition of Azerbaijan territorial integrity, or the need for Azeri and Armenian IDP's to return to Karabakh, and Armenia's *de facto* rule over the Karabakh military and economic structures (ICG, 2005: 9) have been hard issues for the EU. Furthermore, the EU does not provide assistance for rehabilitation to Karabakh and the only European presence in the negotiations is led by France.

EU's commitment to assist in conflict resolution in the neighborhood countries, including the South Caucasus has been striving to change existing conditions, facilitating dialogue and fostering confidence. In the South Caucasus, the EU's presence is felt mostly through assistance in reconstruction and rehabilitation to South Ossetia and some projects in the Gali district near Abkhazia. International assistance to Karabakh has been limited by the lack of conflict settlement but also by the refusal of authorities in Baku to authorize such activities. Azerbaijan maintains an

economic embargo on both Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh and as such only Armenia and its diaspora deliver assistance to the separatist region. A further possibility for conflict management is the development of regional cooperation mechanisms supporting confidence-building. Although it has been extremely hard to have the three South Caucasus countries cooperating with each other (ICG, 2006b: 15), in the framework of the EU's new regional cooperation initiative on a Black Sea Synergy the potential is greater since it is a diluted format that also includes the major regional players⁵⁶.

The ENP thus attempts to better coordinate assistance, enhance political and economic involvement, and prepare the ground for long-term transformation. The reluctance to deploy more visible ESDP means and the low profile kept in the negotiation formats have contributed to keeping an image of a weak political player in the region. Notwithstanding, this might mean the EU is better able to do its work on the ground, away from politicized issues, drawing on regional and local partnerships and regarding work in the Caucasus as better suited by a system of division of labour among International Organisations.

Energy security and development strategies in Eurasia

As the Soviet Union collapsed, energy from the Caspian basin developed into a focus for Western attention. As early as 1998,

⁵⁶ Regional cooperation has been very limited and dysfunctional. One example is the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus, or the TRACECA Programme where officially cooperation has been assured, but with very limited results in confidence building. For more information on these two projects see <http://rec-caucasus.org/recc/index.php?t=index&f=2&su=02010> and <http://www.traceca-org.org> For information on the Black Sea Synergy see http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07_160_en.pdf

President Bill Clinton's initiative for a East-West Energy Transport Corridor, delivering gas and oil from the Azeri fields in the Caspian through Georgia to the Turkish and European markets, was meant to assure two strategic objectives: strengthening the sovereignty and independence of these Caucasian nations; and promoting a Western orientation for these newly independent countries making use of their relations with Turkey (Joseph, 1999: 10). Western companies' political and financial investment in the AIOC⁵⁷ consortium is telling of the increasing interest of Western governments in accessing energy reserves in the Caspian and transporting them through the Black Sea (Aydin, 2004: 7). It was not until the EU started to devise a common energy policy that political support for the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline, inaugurated in May 2006, would become a reality. It took more than ten years for such project to be completed and operational, but it has proved to be the backbone of cooperation with a reluctant European Union.

EU's first attempts to be involved in energy and transport initiatives in Eurasia go back to the TACIS financed TRACECA and INOGATE⁵⁸ projects set up in 1993 in the framework of intergovernmental structures, putting together EU, Caucasian and Central Asian states. The deliverables were nevertheless very few and its political impact limited. The level of political engagement in the Eurasian energetic option remained constrained by efforts to bring Russia to participate in a market-based energy system in Europe. In an attempt to sell its market design, which would allow the completion of the EU's internal gas market and

⁵⁷ Azerbaijan International Operating Company is a consortium of 10 major international oil companies and SOCAR (State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic) exploring Azeri oil and gas fields in the Azeri portion of the Caspian since the early 1990's.

⁵⁸ TRACECA stands for Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia; INOGATE stands for Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe.

reduce its structural dependence on the Middle East energy, the Union promoted the expansion of the European Energy Charter membership (Hoogeveen and Perlot, 2005: 49). This partially explains why US attempts to develop a stronger stance in the Caspian region were not supported by the EU which chose to engage in closer relations with Russia, Iran and Algeria, leaving the Eurasian option untapped (Cutler, 2002). A swift change of perspective would be reinforced by the positions stated in the European Security Strategy, the European Neighborhood Policy strategy papers and the European Commission Green Paper on Energy (EC, 2006a), all pointing to the importance of the Caspian region in guaranteeing energy stability to the EU.

The efforts led by the Commission underline the need to diversify supply and ensure EU's energy security, providing political and financial support to new pipelines and networks (EC, 2003: 25). The Caspian Basin assumed a high profile as a region of producing and transit countries linking Central Asia to Europe through the Black and Caspian Seas. By bringing these countries closer to the European standards and values, the EU expects to develop stable partnerships contributing to both EU energy security and regional modernization and sustainable social, economic and political development (EC, 2003: 12; EC, 2006b: 4-5). Furthermore, this entails a real alternative to Russian controlled routes of energy that proved susceptible to political use in the cases of Ukraine, Belarus, but also Georgia and Armenia (Larsson, 2006: 8-9). From a Caucasian perspective, EU engagement has been slow, inconsistent and unwilling to upset Russia. At times dismissive of its own aspirations to be seen as a world player, the EU was unable to give political backing to the BTC project or to engage in designing sustainable reform strategies in these countries, allowing members states companies to run parallel energy policies uncoordinated at the EU level. By politically stating its engagement with the region and by stimulating investment in

energy infra-structure its interests become higher and more visible. This demands a more careful and coherent policy, coordinated between institutions, member and partner states, aiming at shared goals of a responsible and fair use of the world's energy resources.

As in other areas, the Union's engagement in Caucasian energy politics has been increasingly coordinated with NATO. In 2000, a Special Representative for the region was appointed by NATO and a growing complementarity is being developed between the two organisations: NATO membership perspectives and Partnership for Peace mechanisms have ensured greater democratic control over the military and its modernization; increasingly its military capabilities in the region have also been used to guarantee the physical security of energy infrastructures, while the EU draws on the soft power instruments of diplomacy and economic weight to ensure that further Euro-Atlantic integration follows (de Haas, 2006: 71-73). The attempt by the German Presidency of the Council of the EU to develop a EU Strategy on the neighboring region of Central Asia (Council of the EU, 2007) strives to ensure that the EU has a stake in the development of the energy potential of this region; it is essential to the sustainability of the BTC and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas line, as well as the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline which is planned to deliver Kazakh and Turkmen gas through Azerbaijan into Turkey and European Markets⁵⁹. This engagement has been designed to provide a mix of energy and infrastructure investments, with basic poverty alleviation initiatives (Pantucci and Petersen, 2007), with a view to open the door for European investment and political influence in Central Asia.

⁵⁹ For more details see Bhadrakumar, M. K. (2007) "Russia draws Europe into its orbit" *Asia Times online*, 17 May, available at www.asiatimes.com, assessed on 12 July 2007.

Assessment and future prospects for EU/SC relations

The European presence in the South Caucasus has been mostly limited and uncoordinated since these states became independent. Either unwilling or unable to support conflict settlement efforts at the EU level, its strategy was directed at the rehabilitation of conflict regions as part of confidence building measures conducive to conflict resolution. The energy potential of the region was also largely overlooked as a valid regional development strategy and as part of a necessary diversification effort in order to achieve energetic sustainability and security.

The ENP stands as an attempt to coordinate a common EU approach towards the neighbors, identifying common goals and common ground for cooperation. EU security and strategic concerns have been at the heart of ENP expansion to the Southern Caucasian countries, both in rhetoric and actions. A speech of threats and perils emanating from the neighborhood made member states act, while energy has been the driver for long-sought forms of regional cooperation. EU's traditional approach to security however is a comprehensive one, privileging political and economic stability as necessary preconditions for long-term peace and development.

The ENP thus drives in many ways from previous enlargement strategies of conditionality and socialization, though in a context where membership is not offered. This weakens the EU's ability to push reforms, particularly where local ownership is lower. In this context the EU can be seen as a catalyst for change, anchoring reforms and providing the necessary investment for development. However, there is still the need for more visible political support and engagement in all issues pertaining to regional affairs, namely in the framework of the Wider Black Sea area.

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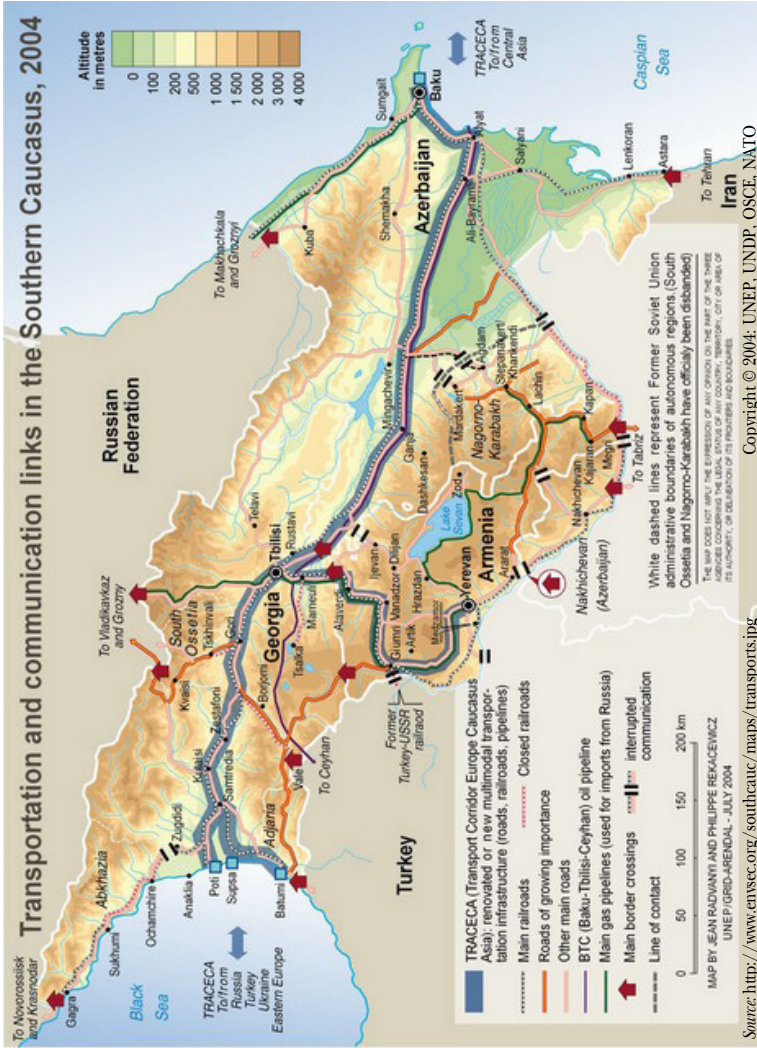
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Annex 1



The ENP and the Saharwi conflict resolution:
doomed to failure?

RUI NOVAIS⁶⁰

In the North of Africa, between Mauritania and Morocco, there lies one of the remaining non-self-governing territories whose decolonization process lingers unfinished and unresolved: the Western Sahara. After thirty years of illegal Moroccan occupation and sixteen of ceasefire, one deliberation by the International Court of Justice, several resolutions and various UN-sponsored peace plans, the exile of the Saharwi people persists as well as the denial of its self-determination in clear violation of international law. The result is a ‘state-in-waiting’ considering the possibility of the return to the armed struggle in light of the continued deadlock.

Besides being one of the long-lasting conflicts in world affairs, the Western Sahara fosters strained relations between Algeria and Morocco and has been a main impediment to Maghrebi integration and Mediterranean Basin stability, a crucial issue for the European Union (EU) from a strategic point of view. Moreover, besides “being a source of potential instability”, according to the UN’s Secretary General Personal Envoy, Peter Van Walsum, there

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is the danger of the Western Sahara becoming “a threat to international peace and security” (UN, 2006).

It is within this context that the paper is divided into four sections. Firstly, I offer a brief background of the history of the Saharwi conflict that will bring into light the factors which account for the maintenance and persistence of the dispute. Secondly, I dwell on the challenges and dilemmas facing external actors involved in conflict resolution dynamics. Thirdly, I explore the aspects that have prevented the EU from abating the conflict, regardless of its multiple initiatives including the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). Finally, I discuss the potential role of the EU in overcoming the considerable inherent limitations and extrinsic obstacles facing the last African colony and in reaching for a definitive solution for the Western Sahara.

A stalemate conflict on the doorstep

The contemporary roots of the Western Sahara’s dispute date back to 1975. The decolonization of the former Spanish territory was neither a typical nor pacific process. Instead, it was marked by various disruptions and drawbacks which help to explain why the conflict within this territory remained unresolved for so many decades. In the early 1970s the UN exerted pressure on Spain to go ahead and speed up the decolonization process. In 1974, Madrid announced its intention to organize a referendum in its colony (following the UN recommendation), and to this end it undertook a preliminary census in August of that year. This clashed with Rabat’s expansionist territorial aspirations to see the emergence of the pre-colonial ‘Great Morocco’ which incorporated the Western Sahara.⁶¹

⁶¹ The territorial ambition of a Great Morocco was promoted by the Istiqlal party and involved taking in not only the Western Sahara, but also present day Mauritania, and much of Senegal, Mali and Algeria.

Besides those underlying historic reasons, the conflict has also been fuelled by the ‘culture of looting natural resources’ factor (Schnabel, 2001: 18). Moroccan interest in the Western Sahara rested on the fact that this specific territory contained one of the largest areas of high quality phosphate which can be exploited by surface mining as well as considerable and reputedly rich fishing resources along its coast (Ruf, 1986: 71).⁶² Additionally, fieldwork has been conducted confirming the existence of gas and oil reserves.

Against this background, Rabat initiated a series of measures aimed at stalling and thwarting any development potentially conducive to the independence of the area and eventually invaded the Western Sahara in 1975. Facing a policy of *fait accompli* undertaken by Rabat, without consulting the indigenous inhabitants, Spain secretly divided up the Western Sahara between Morocco and Mauritania under the Madrid tripartite agreements of 1975.

In the meantime, the Polisario Front⁶³ was established and the Arab Sahrawi Democratic Republic was created, with backing from Algeria in February 1976 — a development which led to the juridical existence to the Saharwi state. By founding the SADR while administering an émigré population Polisario inaugurated a new scenario in Africa: a state in exile fighting against an African invader. Since then a two-fold effort has been made by Polisario towards keeping the file on the Sahrawi decolonization process open while convincing the international community to recognize the SADR. The long and difficult battle that was to proceed there-

⁶² Besides the above mentioned factors there was also the geo-strategic location of the Western Sahara next to Canary Islands where a US military base (and spy satellites) was based.

⁶³ A truly representative movement of the different Sahrawi nationalist militant organisations was created on 10 May 1973, the Polisario Front (Frente Popular para la Liberación de Sanguía el Hamra y Río de Oro) an armed resistance movement against the Spanish colonizer and afterwards against Moroccan occupation.

after towards self-determination was largely ignored during the Cold War period.

Peace progress was only visible in August 1988 when both Morocco and Polisario accepted a five-year negotiated Settlement Plan. The UN and OAU called for direct negotiations but Morocco resisted due to fears that it would signal further weakness within internal political circles. Hassan II was to change his attitude the following year when an unprecedented encounter took place in Marrakesh that prompted a unilateral declaration of a cease-fire which marked the beginning of a negotiating process. On 6 September 1991, a cease-fire agreement was sealed between Polisario and the Moroccan authorities after 15 years of war and the UN sent a mission to supervise the cease fire and to prepare the referendum — the UN Mission for the Referendum in the Western Sahara (MINURSO). Since then, the MINURSO has been trying to implement the peace plan that has already known diverse strategies and approaches as well as numerous deadlocks.

More recently, in April 2007, the UN Security Council 5669 meeting unanimously extended the MINURSO mandate in the Western Sahara for a further six months and called upon the parties — Morocco and Polisario — to enter negotiations (under the auspices of the Secretary General) “without preconditions and in good faith, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution” (2007).

Challenges and dilemmas of external mediation

International and regional organisations are pivotal fora and active agents in conflict resolution dynamics. Such external input is required particularly in two distinct recurrent scenarios: when the parties implicated in the dispute are not able or willing to reach an agreement; or when a plebiscite or referendum cannot

be held in the disputed territory (Miall, 1992). The vital external intervention role involves cajoling the parties into the negotiating process, injecting the funds and offering support for the peace agreement to be achieved (Adejumobi, 2004). Nevertheless, whilst involved in such mediation, third parties should be aware of a number of mandatory principles which facilitate or hamper their conflict resolution efforts (Groom, 2007).

Firstly, the participation of all parties in the dispute is imperative. In the case of asymmetrical conflicts this may involve disempowering the stronger party thereby bringing all contenders down to the same level — a ‘parity of esteem’. Secondly, the focus should be on the problem rather than on the actors. Lastly, external actors should not be judgmental and directive but should act as impartial fact finders (setting the facts straight) and be supportive of the contenders to the dispute while seeking or inventing a solution which will be backed by all involved. This is pivotal since the conflict resolution involves a new relationship not based on coercion but on the satisfaction of all parties to the dispute who are fully aware of the available options (Groom, 2007). Moreover, a gradual process of resolution is recommended in complicated conflicts as a necessary means to achieving mutual communication and adjustments between the parties (Miall, 1992).

Furthermore, external intervention by either international or regional organisations in conflict resolution (which may or not involve preventive diplomacy efforts) is also vulnerable to limitations and difficulties. For instance, although conflict resolution has recently strengthened its arm in taking into the realm of the international community to intervene in cases where states default in exercising responsibility, in practice the principle of state sovereignty still endures. This is so since organizations are formed by and are subject to the states, therefore being unable to devour their creators (James, 2000: 20). Consequently, organiza-

tions tend to pursue the courses of action that their member states are willing take thus severely limiting their room for maneuver and achievements.

A further pitfall regards the fact that conflict resolution seldom involves the interests of neighboring countries as well as friendly or allied governments who side with each party. Such contingency of external intervention may result in either ‘constructive’ or ‘obstructive engagement’.⁶⁴ In other words, an external actor may fend off potential dangers and take advantage of opportunities when they occur in an attempt to gain kudos. Or, as Schnabel purports, it can accentuate the adversarial relationships since “Doing something about conflict resolution is resisted by many governments — and thus intergovernmental organisations” (2001: 25).

Against this background of being hostage of their member states, of good and bad neighbors and allies, external actors’ mediation can both ameliorate the situation and be counter-productive. Indeed, in some cases instead of extinguishing and resolving the disputes, third parties’ inconclusive intervention may dampen or freeze conflicts (Ginty, 2006: 9).

Half-hearted support and a ‘twisted’ ring of friends

The EU has defined the Maghreb as a priority both in terms of security and politico-economic since 1989. Evidence shows, however, that that this has not yet transcended the declaratory front. Following the failure of the Global Mediterranean Policy (1972) and the Renovated or Re-directed Mediterranean Policy (1989) which was incapable of resolving the socio-economic problems and

⁶⁴ The idea of obstructive engagement is hereby employed as opposed to Chester Crocker’s notion of constructive engagement which refers to the attempt to build bridges between adversaries in a dispute (Crocker et al, 1997).

lacked a politico-military dimension, an innovative approach to the Mediterranean policy was experimented by the EU. Different schemes (Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean, 5 + 5, Mediterranean Forum) were decided upon and implemented in order to enhance the Euro-Mediterranean relations (Bishop, 2003).

A global partnership for the region, however, was only to be achieved at the Barcelona Conference in 1995 when the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) was launched. The aim was to create a 'common area of peace and stability' which in the end turned out to be a deception because none of the area's conflicts has been resolved (Holm, 2005).

More recently, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), whereby a ring of friends aspired to enlarge the EU's peace and stability zone by encompassing its Eastern and Southern neighbors, has reinforced the EU's intentions towards the Mediterranean. Such a security partnership, based on a positive conditionality and using a number of economic and political incentives, should, first and foremost commit Europeans to resolving ongoing disputes and conflicts (Holm, 2005). Notwithstanding the 'new' stated objectives, it remains to be seen whether the ENP is more ingenious and effective than its predecessors. The test of time will unveil the ENP's hindrances and shortcomings.

An analysis of the Western Sahrawi dispute, in particular, reveals a continuity line in terms of the EU's approach and the durability of the difficulties faced by the organization in the conflict resolution, even under the ENP.

Overall, the EU's positioning regarding the Saharwi question over the last two decades seems to have hesitated between a compromised silence and the nominal support of the role and the efforts of the UN initiatives.⁶⁵ When compared with Israel-Palestine,

⁶⁵ The same could be said about the policies towards the Mediterranean. The 'Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative' (BMEI), launched at the G-8

Bosnia or Cyprus issues, the EU's role has been relatively inactive or low profile in the Western Sahara. Indeed, the Saharwi conflict has been placed on the back burner by the EU authorities given the prevailing economic interest as well as geo-political and geo-strategic concerns that have been taking the upper-end to the detriment of human rights and international legal concerns.

Reproducing and translating both the content and spirit into UN General Assembly and Security Council's resolutions, the EU's official documents regard the Moroccan occupation as illegal and acknowledge the Sahrawi self-determination which may prove decisive for Western Sahara as well as for the EU's own credit. Although international law seems to have been of little use in the resolution of the Western Sahara conflict, as the East Timor case has also demonstrated, in the future it may prove to keep the unfinished issue on the agenda over the years and to set the legal boundaries. In fact, the recognition of the non-self-governing territory status of the former Spanish colony has been of great importance. Initially, it allowed the Sahrawi authorities and Polisario to pursue their lonely campaign for their common cause and it could legitimise an eventual intervention by the international community ahead.

Apart from elucidating the affair, the EU has not made a contribution in terms of bringing down all contenders down to the same level by disempowering the stronger party. This could have been achieved by improving both the Polisario and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) on the diplomatic front and acknowledging the latter instead of perpetuating the *nullius* recognition of a non-existing state — which is close to Rabat's pretensions.⁶⁶ Such a lack of parity of esteem to some

summit at Sea Island, Georgia, on 8-10 June 2004 and then expanded upon at the EU and NATO summits is a good example of the EU following the US initiative as recently as after the Iraq war (Kühnhardt, 2003).

extent accounts for the suboptimal results in the conflict resolution on the Western Sahara.

Another element of continuity regards the involvement of other international actors. On the one hand, some neighboring countries have been interested in not allowing Morocco to occupy a territory rich in resources and having a state on its border which does not recognize and has territorial ambitions in the Algerian territory.⁶⁷ On the other hand, the lack of political will from the major powers to improve the UN resolutions also persisted under the ENP. Indeed, despite the nominal support given by the Western powers to the consecutive UN sponsored peace plans and to the recurrent endeavours to hold a plebiscite in the territory, such powers (notably the US and France) have abstained from exerting pressure upon the Moroccan authorities to implement a definitive solution to the conflict.⁶⁸

The EU is also largely responsible for the half-hearted support of other external actors and its mediation potential has been limited by the partisan role played by two of its member-states: France (in favour of Morocco) and Spain (supporting Polisario). By siding with each party to the conflict, the EU has not only jeopardised the non-partisan status normally required in a mediating role but also to some extent contributed to hardening po-

⁶⁶ Both the UN and the AU have acknowledged the Polisario as a legitimate party to the dispute and have insisted upon direct dialogue and negotiations between Morocco and the Sahrawi representatives.

⁶⁷ Precisely the same festering issue of territorial claims, although in this case involving Ifni, Ceuta and Melilla has also strained the Spanish-Moroccan relationship.

⁶⁸ In 1981 both France and the USA successfully exerted some degree of pressure on Rabat to accept a 12-point plan which included among other things, the confinement of Moroccan troops, international peacekeeping and return of refugees. This episode is revealing that a different attitude would be a weapon that could exert substantial leverage over Morocco.

sitions and crippling relationships between conflicting parties. Moreover, such internal disunity is detrimental to EU's foreign policy which would be far more effective if carried out by all member states together (Cameron, 1999: 70-71).

A further pitfall regards the apparent incapacity or disinclination to use its potential to the full, notably in the case of the Western Sahara dispute. Taken into consideration that no state has yet acknowledged the Moroccan de facto ruling over the Western Sahara, there is no tension between the principles of sovereignty or internal affairs and the humanitarian intervention. Morocco is the occupying force of Western Sahara preventing a waiting-state to take office and the Sahrawi people to exercise their right of self-determination. It seems therefore to be the case of Morocco pushing aside the global system of law and order, with the condoning of most Western powers who fear the undesirable prospect of the unstable and unfriendly Morocco. Not only is this of the EU's uneasiness to move from the 'culture of non-intervention' to the 'culture of non-indifference' but it also corroborates the contradictory nature of the external actors' mediation role in conflict resolution: either a driving force towards solving the conflict or stymieing and preventing its success.

Conclusion

The status of an emerging global actor presupposes the building and following of a structured and effective foreign policy with respect to ongoing conflicts, both within its own region and in its periphery. When the EU assumed the Mediterranean as a strategic region and promoted the ENP, it brought an old conflict into its jurisdiction. The Western Sahara conflict is basically a territorial dispute also involving competition for resources and regional political power which has prevented both Maghrebi integration

and the African unity for more than 30-years. Moreover, its long-lasting stalemate constitutes a pebble in the shoe of the international community as well as a permanent latent security threat in the Mediterranean Basin. Above all, and for the purposes of this study, it represents a partial failure in the EU's curriculum and a hindrance to the ENP's success.

Despite the meritorious attempts of conflict management (more than resolution), the considerable inherent limitations and extrinsic obstacles faced by the EU in the last African colony illustrate the regional organizations' impediments to putting an end to the conflict. Mostly, the Western Sahara example reveals the huge gap between rhetoric and policy of the EU as a global player and corroborates the perpetuation of the non-interference principle which still leaves the organization hostage to the will of its member states. An aggravating factor is that the Western Sahara has been a revealing example of the lack of unity among EU members; this has contributed to the frailty of the organizations' common foreign policy which hampers the European pro-active pillar towards the conflict resolution.

Meanwhile, the peace accord and plans for the self-determination referendum in the Western Sahara are becoming almost moribund which makes the collaboration of international and regional organizations even more pressing. Ironically, the EU may still play a pivotal role in a conflict which is difficult to settle and hard to resolve. The EU, through the ENP, still has the potential to facilitate the dialogue and create a regional order of peace and stability, an atmosphere in which a lasting resolution can be found to existing regional conflicts like those of the Western Saharan. Disputes such as the Saharwi one, however, require a sophisticated and complex approach to foreign policy which promotes the EU as an engaged and constructive player instead of a passive bystander.

EU's multi-dimensional strategy has had only limited achievements until now and can at best be characterized in most cases as

a partial failure. In order to overcome this shortcoming, member states must empower the EU to make it a credible institution and to enable it to successfully confront enduring problems like the Western Saharan conflict. Indeed, if the ENP were to succeed, the EU would be able to assume itself as a convincing global actor by enhancing its common action capacity in the conflict resolution field on the world stage. Otherwise, the ENP will add up to nothing more than a re-branded prolongation of previous European initiatives for the Mediterranean, and the risk of EU being viewed as a minor global actor.

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European Foreign Policy and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: rhetoric versus practices

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The European Union is an atypical international actor, which results from a complex process of economic, social and political integration. It is not a state but a set of states; it is not a Federation but a Union of sovereign states; it is not a Confederation but an intricate structure of broad executive and legislative capabilities.

The European Union is an organization of a supranational nature, which has legislative, executive and jurisdictional powers that are accomplished through several levels and different decision-making processes. The configuration of these powers has been developed in a changeable way, with different rhythms, depending on whether we are talking about economic, social or political integration. As once defined by the former President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, the European Union is a *non-identified political object*.

But this political object is, today, an actor in the international system. The European Union has developed relations with States and International Organizations, on a bilateral and multilateral basis. Its economic external action is recognised and the Euro-

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pean Union is an economic giant in international markets. However, the same cannot be said of the political sphere, at least to the same extent.

The international political influence of an actor, in this case a Union of States, can be revealed through its capacity to influence the others' decision-making process on transnational questions or through its participation at decisive moments in the organization of the international system. In all this, the European Union has assumed a modest position. For some, it is less than expected; for others, it is in line with the main objectives, mainly economic, defined by the Member States.

It is not clear what role the European Union should fulfil on the international scene or its place in a world that is dominated by sovereign states. Some argue that the European Union should get involved in the international system as a sovereign state, with the same kind of powers and instruments — which means that it should have political and military capabilities, besides the economic ones it already has — and that it should assume itself as an international power. Others argue that the European Union should only be an economic power — following the model of economic integration as a driving force to political integration — and that it should leave the ambition of political affirmation as a secondary task.

Irrespective of the adopted position, the truth is that the European Union is developing foreign policy action in different world regions, namely the Middle East. This region is undoubtedly of strategic importance to Europe. This is due to energetic dependence, but also because of the geographic proximity and the constant, real or latent, conflicts that affect the region. In this regard, the State of Israel and its relations with the neighbouring countries have a central role.

Israel, which was created in a particularly hostile regional context, tries to guarantee its security and territorial integrity and

has been involved in different conflicts since the moment of its independence (1948). On one hand, these conflicts, which have different levels of violence, are, on one hand, with the neighbouring countries — namely Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria — and, on the other hand, with the Palestinian community.

This instability in a region like the Middle East, that is so close to Europe, has direct consequences for the European States at the economic, social and political level.

However, despite this unequivocal importance, the European Union has not been able to promote itself as an effective actor in the region. It has orientated its action through consecutive political declarations and financing initiatives in the framework of developing aid projects.

Besides all these initiatives, we can argue that the EU is nowhere near being the main external actor in the Middle East. In fact, it is the United States who, over the last decades, have taken the lead in the international action in the region and, consequently, in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

The accomplishment of a European external action in the Middle East presents a series of complex questions. On the one hand, it involves the perception of EU member states — especially Great Britain, France and Germany — towards issues such as historical heritage which involve delicate political discussions. On the other hand, it implies a strong transatlantic dimension, since after the end of Second World War, and particularly after the Suez crisis (1956), the United States consolidated their position as the most influential power in the region from the political, military and economic point of view.

From the transatlantic dimension, we can see that by and large the United States defined the guarantee of Israel's security as the main objective for the region, along with the security of the Arab States considered "moderate" e.g. Egypt and Jordan, thereby gaining access to the main gas and oil pipelines. In most situations,

Europe gives political support to the American positions whilst trying to maintain communication links with more awkward governments, such as Syria. At the same time, Europeans and Americans, all dependent on Middle East's energy resources, contribute to supporting the costs of international commitments towards the region at a political and financial level (Silvestri, 2003: 47).

Therefore, we cannot say that Europe has been absent from the Middle East peace process. The EU has developed what can be considered to be a coherent perspective over the resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the negotiation process between EU member states which has been taking place over the last decades. Even if this has given few practical results.

The European integration and the Middle East peace process

The European initiatives in Middle East issues are one of the longest and most constant projects of the EU foreign policy, which dates back to the first meetings in the framework of European political cooperation (EPC).

The creation of the EPC allowed member states to discuss important external policy issues. In a forum free from formal commitments and on a confidential basis, they could present all their points of view without any public visibility. Since the beginning of the political cooperation process, the issues regarding the Middle East were a subject of discussion and negotiations which ended with a series of political declarations of which we underline the Venice Declaration of 1980 in which the European Council defined the guiding principles of the European strategy to the resolution of the conflict (European Council, 1980).

The Venice Declaration was one of the main documents of the EPC because it may be one of the most explicit European political declarations on the Middle East. This document defined the

main topics that the member states considered to be essential to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel's reaction was strongly critical. On the contrary, the Palestinians supported it, largely because the document was particularly to their favour.

The spirit of the Venice Declaration went beyond any other document that had been approved so far, namely the United Nations Security Council's resolutions — in particular the resolution 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) —, since it referred to “Palestinian people” and not to “refugees”. With this declaration, the member states were facing the Palestinian problem as something different of the conflict that opposes this community to the State of Israel, considering that the question of the refugees was just one of the many questions that demanded resolution. According to this Declaration, the conflict's resolution and the Palestinians' problems demanded the involvement of all parties, in what we can consider an allusion to the acceptance of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as a full actor in the negotiations thus accrediting this organization with a similar status to the state of Israel. We must remember that, at that time, Israel was fighting the PLO, which was defined as a terrorist organization. In the light of these reflections, we cannot but consider the Venice Declaration as an important landmark in the European external policy.

With the implementation of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in 1993 the Middle East was identified as one of the five priority areas for European external action (European Council, 1993). The beginning of CFSP coincided with the re-launching of the Middle East peace process in Madrid and Oslo. Since the beginning of this process, European countries had showed some ability to promote complementary forums of dialogue and contacts between the parties in conflict, far from international attentions, the impact of which should not be ignored.

With the Oslo peace process, the political dimension of European involvement was particularly focused on supporting the

institutional establishment of the Palestinian Authority in a multilateral framework and through political statements (Assenbourg, 2003: 11-26). However, so far, the EU's declaratory positions have not been sufficiently backed by concrete or symbolic policies. Such is the case of the illegality of the occupation, settlement building and annexation of Eastern Jerusalem.⁷⁰ More than that, even though they are foreseen in the community law, the EU never applied any sanctions on Israel for disrespecting the United Nations Security Council's resolutions, an economic instrument that can be applied when it comes to foreign policy. In fact, the use of this type of instruments would be very difficult to justify politically. Because there is always the possibility of arguing that the EU gives financial and technical aid to the Arab regimes in the region, and to the Palestinian Authority, that also fail to fulfil certain guiding principles of the international system — namely democratic political systems, respect for Human Rights and the rule of Law.

Thus, we can argue that the European strategy may be considered contradictory. While, on the one hand, it defends a framework of principles and values that should be the basis of the international system, such as those mentioned above, on the other hand it does not reinforce their total observation — even with the principle of political conditionality⁷¹ —, probably because it con-

⁷⁰ One of the examples are the products from Israeli settlements — which assume an irrelevant qualitative importance but constitute a politically delicate situation — that continue to be exported to European countries under the same preferential conditions guaranteed to Israel, although they are not included in the Association Agreement. This is also the case of the EU's rejection of the excessive use of force by Israel during the second *intifadah*, condemned in the several declarations; however, the decision to establish an arms embargo on Israel never happened and was never even seriously looked upon. (Assenbourg, 2003).

⁷¹ The principle of conditionality is used by the EU in the attribution of financial aid to third countries. According to this principle, the attribution of funds

siders that the maintenance of these regimes may in some way benefit the stability in the Middle East, particularly in terms of security. If this is the reason grounding the European strategy towards the regimes considered as “moderate” in the region, even if this is not publicly defended, it does not go without criticism. Particularly because we can argue that there is no evidence that these regimes will guarantee the security and stability in the region, especially in the long term,. On the contrary, the authoritarian exercise of power, the absence of economic growth and the poor living conditions of the people in the region⁷² — which contrasts with the wealth of certain elites, with several corruption accusations — tend to originate insurgency feelings that will certainly not be favourable to stability in the Middle East.

Therefore, when we analyse the various political declarations issued by the EU we can conclude that there is a general perspective, as well as a framework of common values, based on International Law, which is always there. Nevertheless, the political *will* to use the instruments that are available — political and, particularly, economic —, so as to put pressure on the some actors, Palestinians and Israelis, simply seems to be missing.

In 1996 the European Union created the figure of the EU Special Envoy to the Middle East Peace Process (European Council, 1996) that, with the Presidency of the European Council and the High Representative for CFSP, represents the European Union in the region. All together they try to make contacts with

depends on the accomplishment of a series of principles — namely democratic principles, respect for Human Rights and the rule of Law —, thus guaranteeing political and social developments in the receiving countries, as well as transparency in the processes of financial aid. This principle was first applied in 1997 in the eastern European countries, but was later extended to all countries receiving financial aid. (European Council, 1996; European Council, 1997)

⁷² An account of the political, economic and social conditions for development in the Arab world can be found in (AAVV, 2003)

the parties in conflict and, with other actors involved, try to promote more regular interaction between all involved, besides the aim of enhancing the visibility of the European Union's political role in the region. Moreover the joint European involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been expressed, in a more tangible way, through the assistance to Palestinian territories — with financial and material aid, as well as technical training —, provided either by the European Commission or bilaterally by the Member States.

The EU's direct financial aid was crucial to establish and maintain the governmental institutions in the first years of the Palestinian Authority. Moreover, the EU supported regional and bilateral cooperation projects between Israelis and Palestinians involving water resources, economy, trade and environment. Nonetheless, these projects never obtained the expected results in terms of the nearing both societies.

The European economic and financial aid has been based on the understanding that, on the one hand, the Palestinian people would tend to support the peace process and the most radical positions would be eliminated as a result of economic development — that would lead to an improvement of the living conditions; and, on the other hand, the creation of a viable and democratic Palestinian state would serve the interests of Israel, since it would guarantee its security through the development of good relations with the neighbouring countries. Furthermore, the development of joint projects could lead to a fall in the level of conflict and to the reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. (Assebourg, 2003) However, it seems clear that this economic and financial aid did not have the expected results: the Palestinian Authority did not become independent from external financing; the reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians did not take place; and very little progress was achieved in terms of economic development.

From 1993 to 1996, the European Union's external action towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was centered on political contributions in response to the implementation of several agreements attained, through the financial aid to the Palestinian Authority, the monitoring of the elections in the territories and participation in rounds of multilateral negotiations.

In the European Council of Amsterdam, which took place in June 1997, a document entitled "European Union Call for Peace in the Middle East" was approved (European Council, 1997). With this text, the EU formalized for the first time the possibility of the existence of a Palestinian state side by side with the State of Israel. Nevertheless, this declaration has some inconsistencies. It refers to the acknowledgement of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination "not excluding the option for a state"; in the following sentence it declares that "the creation of a sovereign, viable and peaceful Palestinian *entity*" [our emphasis] would be the best way to guarantee Israel's security. While it is possible to argue that an autonomous entity can be less than a state, we do not think that the same be said about a sovereign entity.

In the following years the conflict continued to escalate with successive Palestinian threats of unilateral declaration of independence and recurring Israeli threats of occupation of the territories under the Palestinian Authority's administration.

In March 1999, the European Council of Berlin approved the *Berlin Declaration*, supporting the creation of a Palestinian state. The possibility of acknowledging the Palestinian state was strongly criticized by Israel. Similarly, it did not gather any American support. In the months that followed, the conflict grew in violence, culminating in 2000 in the outbreak of the second Palestinian *intifadah*. The peace process was paralyzed, once again.

After three years of violence in the region, on April 2003, the diplomatic *Quartet* — composed of representatives from United

Nations, United States, Russian Federation and European Union — released its *Road Map for Peace*, which aimed for a permanent solution to the Middle East conflict. This document established a three-year timetable to end the conflict and envisaged the creation of an independent and viable Palestinian state by 2005. The plan, which was promoted by the Quartet and outlined without the direct involvement of the Israelis and Palestinians, again did not come to fruition. However, it is still the main document, recognised by the International Community, on which the diplomatic initiatives for the peace process is based.

One of the few initiatives that took place in accordance with the principles that were defined in the Road Map were the Palestinian presidential, municipal and legislative elections which aimed to build viable Palestinian institutions. Mahmoud Abbas was elected President of the Palestinian Authority in 2005; four of the five rounds of the municipal elections took place⁷³ and Hamas won the legislative elections in January 2006 with 44 percent of the popular vote and 56 percent of the seats. However, the programme presented by the new government was considered unacceptable by the international community and did “not give any clear indication that the Hamas government is prepared to respect the principles established by the European Union: eschewing the use of violence as a means of settling the conflict, recognizing the State of Israel and observing the agreements signed between the Palestinians and Israel” (Solana, 2006). According to this, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union decided at a meeting in Luxembourg on 10th April 2006 to freeze EU aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, and

⁷³ The fifth round of municipal elections never happened because of the situation in Palestinian Territories after the formation of Hamas-led government, in 2005. This means that approximately 25 percent of Palestinians live in districts that did not have elections.

continue with the European Commission's temporary suspension of payments to the Hamas-led government which had been announced some days earlier. This decision was criticized by many international non-governmental organizations, since it would have a direct effect on the living conditions in Palestinian territories; but it was welcomed by the Israeli government that was afraid that Hamas could use this aid to finance terrorist activities. This was probably the first major decision taken by the European Union institutions that was in line with Israeli's ambitions.

When we look at the European political cooperation regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict we can observe that, over the last three decades, the positions of the EU Member States developed towards common perceptions and interests. Bearing in mind the complexity of the conflict under analysis, we can consider that this is in fact an important feat. While we can argue that the EU's external action is nowhere near meeting the expectations because it has not allowed an effective intervention in the alignment of powers in the Middle East, we have to consider that from the political point of view the Union has demonstrated a consistent position towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as demonstrated by the mentioned declarations.

During the last decade, the EU concentrated its efforts on supporting the establishment of an atmosphere that makes lasting peace possible in the Middle East. Accordingly, the EU's policies towards the region present two essential aspects: political and financial support to the peace process; and efforts to achieve regional stability through the multilateral search for solutions.

The European Union's external action towards the Middle East has centered its efforts on supporting the creation of an atmosphere that makes lasting peace possible in the region. Generally speaking, the Union has developed new instruments in the framework of CFSP in order to develop a more efficient external action in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, namely

through the activities of the Special Envoy to the Middle East and the High Representative for CFSP. Nevertheless, the challenge of being accepted by the parties as a legitimate partner remains; particularly, in overcoming a profound lack of confidence of the Israeli political decision makers — as well as the public opinion's — towards the European motivations and pro-Arab alignment. Even after the European decision to cut off financial aid to Hamas-led-government in 2006.

We can argue that the main role of the EU in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is to put pressure on the various actors to attain a just and lasting solution. This will require political will. Even though the deliberations of the European Council are not public, there are several factors showing that inside European Union there is a majority in favour of the adoption of specific measures in the effort to raise the pressure on both parties (Ortega, 2003: 55). Among these factors we can highlight the evolution in the political declarations of the European Council towards a more determined position aimed at achieving a peaceful solution.

There is still a problem in the future European Union's role in the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: to create the necessary political will for a more active presence. If Europe has a defined perspective to the resolution of the conflict, if it has the means to act and simultaneously the international legitimacy, then it gathers all the conditions to lead a peaceful solution that ensures security and prosperity to Israelis and Palestinians. More than this, the European role does not have to be in conflict with the United States since History shows that a mediation process has higher chances of success if it is as a result of joint efforts.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not yet solved; therefore, the results of the European policy — and that of the other actors — can only be evaluated in the face of the efforts made towards its solution. This includes, for instance, the launching or facilitation of contacts or negotiations between the parties in conflict. From

this perspective, the effectiveness of one given action may be observed when the parties in conflict look upon a third actor as desirable or, at least, legitimate. This will certainly be the biggest challenge that the European foreign policy is facing with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

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Kosovo: the Balkans' tip of the iceberg

PEDRO CALDEIRA RODRIGUES⁷⁴

After a considerable period of lethargy, the issue of Kosovo returned early this year (2007) to the top of the international political agenda through the active involvement of the superpowers.

At first, this news would not have been received by the peoples of the Balkans with special enthusiasm, for an ominous reason: the international interference in this region with deep historic roots, has almost always meant war, territorial divide or new states, followed by the exodus of populations and a great deal of suffering.

However, nowadays there is a variety of mechanisms to prevent conflicts and reinforce cooperation and in this particular case they coincide with the strengthening of the association process with the European Union (EU) in the so called “Western Balkans”- an initial step towards a potential full accession. The goal is to guarantee a sort of “perpetual peace” and promote the “common good” in an unstable region neighbouring the vast community space.

One of the latest and decisive issues has to do with the final status of Kosovo — this southern province of Serbia with the vast

⁷⁴ Journalist.

majority of its population of Albanese extraction, Muslim religion and yearnings for independence. This project returned to the UN Security Council in March 2007, giving more responsibilities to the EU as the future “political manager” of the region in substitution of the UN local mission (Unmik).

The first serious signs of Yugoslavia’s desegregation came from Kosovo: in 1981, one year after Tito’s death, with the “Albanese students’ revolt” and in 1989, during Slobodan Milosevic’s power consolidation in Serbia. And it is in Kosovo that the likely “show-down” of former Yugoslavia’s violent desegregation process will take place.

The international players taking decisions on the final status are the same who were involved and influenced decisively the fate of former Yugoslavia: USA, Russia and EU. Once again the eternal Balkan issue generated fractures — poorly disguised — within the Union and served as a pretext for a new verbal war between the US and Russia whose geo- strategic conflicts of interest were again projected on the Balkans.

The southern province of Serbia with an area of 10.877 square km and about two million inhabitants (90% Albanese, according to the rather unreliable statistics, as usual) obtained the status of “international protectorate” (Kumanovo Agreement, June 1999) after nearly three months of NATO air raids in the Spring of 1999 against Slobodan Milosevic’s former Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) justified by Belgrade regime’s repression on the local Albanese population.

UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (June 1999) reaffirmed the “commitment of all member- states to sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)”, before imposing an international administration (Unmik) and the presence of a NATO military force (Kfor, an initial force of 60,000 troops, 17,000 in 2007) with a turbulent beginning due to Moscow’s intention of keeping a military force

in the region. Meanwhile, autonomous local institutions were elected (parliament, president and government) — totally dominated by the various Albanese trends and boycotted by the other groups in this multi- ethnic region, especially by the Kosovar Serbian minority.

At the same time, the non-Albanese populations' exodus continued (Serbs, Gorani, Ashkali, Roma, Turks...) favorite targets of the radical pro- independence factions of Kosovar Albanese (the serious incidents of March 2004 eventually exposed the total inability of Unmik and Kfor to “protect” these populations).

The draft of Kosovo's final status introduced by the UN mediator, Martti Ahtisaari, to the Belgrade and Albanese leaderships in Pristina on 2 February 2007, recognized Kosovo's right to use its own national symbols “namely a flag, a crest and an anthem, which should reflect its multiethnic character”, that is, the accession to international institutions rendering its recognition by other states implicit.

The word “independence” was not explicitly mentioned in this first document, but unlike resolution 1244, Serbia's sovereignty over that territory was not referred either — legal successor to the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the extinct Serbia- Montenegro Union. In practical terms, most analysts concluded that Ahtisaari's first draft already envisioned a “supervised independence” for Kosovo with a transition phase under EU control.

While commenting on the content of these proposals, UN special envoy and former Finnish President defined them as a compromise between the independence aspirations of Kosovar Albanese and Serbia's intention to keep Kosovo as an integrant part of its territory. But, as predicted, no agreement was reached in the “final round” of talks between Serbs and Kosovar Albanese leaders held 10th March 2007 in Vienna and mediated by Ahtisaari. The UN special envoy concluded that conditions did

not prevail for the pursuit of negotiations and at the end of that month he transferred the problem to the Security Council where its five permanent members hold the right of veto.

Meanwhile, some modifications were made to the original document submitted to the Security Council at the end of March, due to Russia's intention to reject any final resolution that recognizes the independence of the territory, with the total support from Belgrade. Thus, in mid-June 2007 a fifth resolution was drafted whence the term "independence" was withdrawn and further "Belgrade- Pristina direct talks" were recommended for a period of 120 days, until 10 December 2007.

Consequently, the negotiations on Kosovo's status were transferred from the Security Council to the "Kosovo Contact Group" (USA, Russia, Germany, France, UK and Italy). Belgrade gained more space to pursue the legal battle to preserve its sovereignty over that province but the final decision was postponed yet again. With this decision, Moscow and Washington avoided a direct confrontation in the Security Council, opting to pursue contacts and pressures on their direct allies (Serbs and Kosovar Albanese). However, contrary to the situation in the UN, Russia does not hold the right of veto within the Contact Group; although not binding, it can approve a decision by majority that is contrary to Belgrade's interests.

In the new negotiations that started at the end of August 2007, the Contact Group is composed of three mediators representing the US, Russia and EU. Wolfgang Ischinger was appointed "European mediator" to the *trojka* — W. Ischinger was recently appointed Berlin's Ambassador to the UK and between 2001-2006 he represented Germany in the US — substituting Stefan Lehne from Austria in this sensitive and crucial phase of the process.

Initially the possibility of extending it was not ruled out, which would imply that the "Kosovo issue" could be inherited by the Slovenian Presidency of the EU, succeeding Portugal in January

2008. December 10th; however, was considered the deadline for this “dialogue of deaf people”.

Russia has already referred that any final decision must be approved by the Security Council, but, as Belgrade, Moscow considers that there still is room for negotiation.

Meanwhile, at the end of June, a Kosovar Albanese delegation headed by president Fatmir Sejdiu was strongly pressured by the Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice to give up their intention of unilaterally proclaiming Kosovo’s independence on November 28th, Albania’s... National Day. And prime-minister Agim Çeku stated that clear guarantees of Kosovo’s independence were given to the delegation after the scheduled 4-month negotiations.

On the contrary, Serbian Parliament passed a new resolution on Kosovo on July 24th 2007 with an ample majority, reaffirming “the basic interests of the State, the legitimate interests of the Kosovar Albanese community and the general interests in preserving the regional stability and the prospect of a prosperous and peaceful future for all citizens”. This document insists on the right of Serbia to keep the inviolability of its boundaries and rejects any solution not in compliance with that right.

Furthermore, the option of sharing Kosovo between Serbia and the local Albanese continues to be officially rejected by all parties, although the last talks mediated by the international *troika* debated that possibility.

This “last opportunity” has failed and on 10 December 2007 the *troika* presented a report to the UN secretary-general, informing him about the predictable outcome.

The question thus returned to the Security Council, but the main problem subsisted: the necessity to approve a new resolution regarding Kosovo, or to pressure Pristina to declare the unilateral independence in a better occasion. And that seemed the solution: the announcement of the new State during the Spring 2008 — after the Serbian and Russian presidential elec-

tions — with the immediate recognition from the United States, and a progressive recognition of the EU member-States, still divided regarding the issue.

However, some EU official spoke about a “virtual unity” regarding the recognition of independence, besides the reservations presented by Cyprus — who said it will never recognize an unilateral declaration of independence — and by Romania, Slovakia and Spain who will not recognise Kosovo either without the UN doing so as well.

But is predictable that a “micro-State” in the Balkans will be conceded to the new Albanian leadership and to the winner of the general election in the region, last 17 November 2007: Hashim Thaçi, a former Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK) commander and the incoming prime-minister. Pressed by Washington and Brussels, he had admitted to declare the independence “before May 2008”.

A few steps were already taken. The European Council the 14 December 2007 in Brussels (the last under the Portuguese presidency) agreed in the principle of sending a 1.800 police, judicial and administrative offices to the province, under the scope of the Defence and Security European Policy (DSEP), a provision of the Ahtisaari plan that predicts a “supervised independence”.

At the same time, the EU leaders offered to accelerate Serbia’s accession to Brussels, but only after Belgrade handed over the indicted fugitives, suspected of war crimes, still at large, mainly the former Bosnian Serb military commander, general Ratko Mladic. The Serbian leadership considerer that proposal “particularly offensive”.

Brussels’ key role is to assure the continuation of direct talks between Belgrade and Pristine, a perspective also supported by Russia and China in the UN Security Council. The same suggestion was advanced by Javier Solana, but fully refused by Belgrade as it would dislocate the Kosovo problem from the UN.

The Western powers have probably arranged an alternative plan due to the impasse in the UN Security Council. The predicted EU mission in Kosovo, to replace the Unmik, is supported by the US, which believes the UN Security Council resolution 1244 has banned Serbia from governing Kosovo since 1999, which makes this replacement a “natural consequence” for Washington.

According to a document presented by the Swedish Foreign minister, Carl Bildt, in the EU summit, the 14 December 2007, in Brussels,

Although the EU member states should recognize Kosovo as *de iure and de facto* independent from Serbia, and oblige themselves to integrate Kosovo into Europe and international organizations, they should also understand that membership in the U.N., the OSCE and the Council of Europe will not be possible for as long as the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 is in effect. Therefore, it will be about recognizing Kosovo ‘with a limited or qualified independence’.

The Swedish proposal envisages a status for northern Kosovo (with Serbian majority) comparable to that of eastern Slavonia (Croatia), which in practice means a gradual reintegration of that region into an independent Kosovo, under the supervision of a special U.N. mission. Serbia and Kosovo would have agreements on “good neighbourly relations,” which would be “directly linked to the processes of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, of both Serbia and Kosovo.” At the same time, Serbia would be sent “a clear message” that it could get EU membership candidate status in 2008, after the European Commission’s proposal in May and the decisions made at the EU heads of state summit in June 2008. Belgrade could also sign the Stabilization and Association Agreement by the end of January 2008.

The Russian veto in the U.N. could jeopardize the EU civil mission of 1.800 police officers and administrators, to replace the Unmik. The alternative could be a request of the UN secretary-general, Ban Ki-Moon, to send a mission on the basis of the Security Council resolution 1244, something Moscow refuses but both the US and the EU major powers agreed on.

As predicted, the UN Security Council failed the 19th November 2007 to break the Kosovo impasse and the US and EU repeated that the potential for further negotiations over the future of Kosovo had been exhausted. In a common statement, the US and the EU envoys considered that the Security Council resolution 1244 allowed for the implementation of the former UN special envoy Martti Ahtisaari's plan for a "supervised independence".

Irreconcilable Positions

In Belgrade, there is virtual consensus, even amongst "pro-European" political leaders: Kosovo is integrated in an internationally recognized sovereign state, temporarily under international administration; that territory is inhabited by a large population of Albanese descent, which in Serbia constitutes a national minority. The recognition of Kosovo's independence by international community will be an unprecedented decision in legal terms and may be disastrous for international law; Kosovo's Albanese are a national minority and the rights of national minorities are not covered by territorial issues.

The leaders of the Serbian coalition Government have unleashed a diplomatic offensive to defend their arguments, dominated by the pro-European parties of President Boris Tadic and Prime-Minister Vojislav Kostunica evoking international law: the UN Charter and the Helsinki Act to stress that they will never

accept a resolution which does not clearly state that Kosovo “is an integrant part of Serbia”, a claim always supported by Moscow. (China stated very tactfully that it will only approve a decision that is “accepted by both parties”.)

Furthermore, and using the “UN Charter basic principle” as a paradigm, they also mention that a parcel of an internationally-recognized state may not be taken away against its will. In addition and recalling the showdown in East Timor (independence), Belgrade claims that Kosovo was never a colony nor was it invaded by an external power and that the recent Balkan conflict affected all the communities of that multi-ethnic province.

For the various Kosovar — Albanese political trends — supported by US officials, some European states and, to a certain extent by the Finnish UN mediator- Kosovo’s future status gathers consensus: they insist on the need of independence and admit a transition phase under supervision or international surveillance until they obtain potential EU and NATO accession.

They insist that the territory “has been lost by Slobodan Milosevic’s Serbia” in 1999 in the wake of the “Kosovo war”. They demand that the final status clearly states that Kosovo is not a part of Serbia, but rather an internationally- recognized state; they only admit that Belgrade negotiates on the future status of the Serbian minority still living in the region and they expect that the final resolution on Kosovo substitutes UN Resolution 1244 and substantiates the territorial split arguing that a potential resumption of negotiations may entail further unrest.

Thus, while the US seems to accept new border alterations in the Balkans, Russia opposes that prospect because of the “dangerous precedent” it could set. However, the successive delays on the final fate of this protectorate have favoured Belgrade’s goals, at least in the short term, always insisting on the reopening of talks and only admitting a supervised autonomy status for its province with provisional international presence. Serbia would therefore

remain dependent on Russia's consent or on its potential veto to a resolution favouring some sort of independence.

Europe as a Protector

Ahtisaari's resolution draft includes the recommendation for the creation of an international group to supervise the application of the agreement led by an international civil representative (ICR) who will act as EU special representative (EUSR). The EU will then establish a mission to monitor the observance of the law (the so-called European Security and Defence Policy) with the purpose of enforcing "Ahtisaari's proposal" or the resolution draft that might be approved and thus promote the development of police and judiciary systems in Kosovo.

Although the last draft discussed at the Security Council did not mention the word "independence", in practice it expected the implementation of the UN envoy's plan: a "supervised independence". For Brussels, Ahtisaari's document favoured a future civil mission of European and international security, even if the final status of the province is yet to be clearly defined. This mission should involve between 1500-2000 staff and will be responsible for the police (organized crime, war crimes, financial investigations, corruption...) and for the judiciary system (property law, detention conditions, etc.) This draft also anticipates the temporary extension of Resolution 1244 for a period of 120 days after the adoption of the new resolution.

In those four months, Unmik would remain in office in direct contact with the ICR until the end of its mandate.

In military terms, NATO has the authority to establish an International Military Presence (IMP) supervised by another "international security organization". The future mission will be authorized to use all means to guarantee its main goal: "security and peace keeping in Kosovo".

A local “professional and multiethnic” “Kosovo Security Force” (KSF) will also be formed; it will be equipped with light material for “specific security functions”. The current Kosovo Protection Force (KPF) composed basically of former members of the separatist armed group UÇK will be dissolved within a year.

In mid-May, the European Union Council of Ministers decided to extend the mandate of the Union Planning Team (EUPT) until September 1st 2007 for future potential participation in the expected police and judiciary mission. This is the 5th extension of this European mission which was supposed to cease functions in September 2006.

The Balkans and the EU Defense Policy

This qualitative jump in the involvement of the EU is a consequence of the new approach in the Western Balkans. Outlined at the Salonica Summit of June 2003 it endowed the Association and Stabilisation Process (ASP) with new aspects inspired by the enlargement process. It was a consequence of the Stability Pact for the Balkan region agreed at Sarajevo in June 1999 (Serbia joined the Pact after October 2000, after former President Slobodan Milosevic’s departure).

Therefore, the mechanisms for the implementation of the internal reforms deemed necessary were reinforced and European partnerships based on the accession partnerships for candidate countries were promoted. In January 2006, the European Commission approved the document «Western Balkans bound for the EU: consolidating stability and increasing prosperity»; this assesses the processes since the Salonica Summit and sets up concrete steps for the global strengthening of the Union’s policy in the Balkans.

At the same time, the negotiations with Serbia on a Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) resumed on 13th June 2007,

after it was considered that Belgrade was increasing its cooperation with the International Penal Court for Yugoslavia (IPCY).

The Yugoslav wars of the 90's represented an enormous challenge for the Union's external ambitions and simultaneously revealed its extreme weakness. The principle of a Common Security and External Policy (CSEP) was eventually formalized early 1992. This initiative coincided, however, with the beginning and expansion of the war in Croatia and in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The international peace conferences sponsored by Brussels failed and the countries of the new EU (former EEC) only managed to act as part of the UN peace-keeping forces (Unprofor) or of US-led NATO forces; this was the case for Bosnia (Ifor/Sfor, 1996), in Kosovo (Kfor, 1999) or in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Amber Fox/Allied Harmony, 2001).

It was precisely in Macedonia (FYROM) that the transfer of NATO forces to the European Union took place in March 2003 in the scope of operation «Concordia», the first EU-led peace-keeping military mission, concluded December 15th 2003. This was immediately followed by operation EUPOL PROXIMA — the second police mission in the history of the Union.

Approved at the end of 2003, among other things the so-called European Security Strategy advocated regional stability and «effective multilateralism» at the international level as response to security threats. It was from this angle that several missions were initiated in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP): in the Balkans mid-2007, EUFOR and EUPM (a police force) prevailed in Bosnia- Herzegovina and a planning team, in Kosovo.

The threats defined by the European Security Strategy include organized crime, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, regional conflicts and «rogue states» — all these categories can apply, at least in theory, to the Balkan region.

In theory, the Union seems to have the will to affirm its role of «regional pacifier» both to resolve conflicts within its borders and in its wider function of «global player», including in the military field.

However, and according to different analysts, the new European security structure remained too vague to enable conclusions to be reached on its final draft (Mitrofanova 2000). It was thought that the future European security architecture would be supplied by a small group of European and non-European states, mainly NATO members, firmly devoted and integrated in democracy practices and would never be an instability factor or threat. In short, a US-led Euro-Atlantic group (dubbed «unipole» by US political scientist, Ira Strauss) in a project tending to unipolarity in contrast with the cold war «bipolarity».

In this setting the «humanitarian intervention» doctrine gained some weight, especially amongst political scientists and US officials. Therefore, the NATO military intervention in Kosovo, justified by «humanitarian reasons» gave way to what Michael Mandelbaum called «Clinton Doctrine». In his views, the military operation against Yugoslavia in the spring of 1999 was designed to establish «a new doctrine to rule military operations in the post cold war era» (Mitrofanova 2000).

From the Stability Pact to the Regional Cooperation Council

Kosovo's complex crisis, including its provisional showdown in June 1999, turned into a 'lesson' for those who wanted to play an important role in the European security keeping process. It is noticeable that Russia remains a candidate for this task.

As Mitrofanova (2000) underlined, the actions unleashed in Kosovo enable us to conclude that the new NATO-led European security structure is based on the assumption that after the disap-

pearance of one of the confronting blocks of the cold war, the survivor became the «winner» — a winner who must guarantee exclusiveness, without sharing.

The attempts to integrate Moscow into the main lines of the stability and security policy of the Euro-Atlantic region did not work out, as expected. As the US diplomat and former Secretary of State Henri Kissinger put it, Kosovo 'became a symbol of loss of influence and public degradation of the Russians imposed by the West.' (Mitrofanova 2000)

NATO's strategic concept has also shown its ambition to become the main pillar of the new European security architecture and a significant player at the global level.

Nevertheless, NATO's air raids against former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) conducted without any UN Security Council deliberation, set a precedent and were characterized by equivocal behaviour and ambiguities which are yet to be explained. A potential independence of Kosovo may open another such precedent.

Setting up in the field, the UN local mission (UNmik) and especially Kfor (NATO) enabled the return of hundreds of thousands of Albanese chased out by Serbian forces or who had fled the conflict, but proved incapable of avoiding the persecution and expulsion of thousands of Serbs, Roma (gypsies) and other ethnic minorities from Kosovo as of summer 1999. The arguable concept of a «multiethnic Kosovo» failed and the recognition of a «supervised independence» may provoke the exodus of the last non-Albanese local populations.

When the EU decided to go ahead with the Stability Pact to Southeast Europe mid-1999, the integration of all Balkan states into the European structures was suggested with the purpose of assuring a safe and long-lasting peace as well as prosperity and stability in the region. Immediately questions were raised on the long term consequences of this initiative, which by “promoting

the europeization of the Balkans could originate ‘Europe’s balkanization...’”. (Varwick, 2000)

For the EU, the Stability Pact appeared as the most obvious consequence of the Kosovo war. In May 1999, the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs had agreed on a common position on the Stability Pact for the Balkan countries, from the perspective of future integration in the Euro- Atlantic structures. The Stabilization and Association Agreements were directed to Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (then formed by Serbia and Montenegro) and anticipated regional cooperation in Southeast Europe. They still included the prospect of full integration in the EU structures, the consolidation of democracy and other reforms. (Varwick, 2000)

This decisive involvement of the Union in the Balkans was not the immediate solution for the numerous problems to be solved and had different developments. Thus, Croatia has initiated accession negotiations and Macedonia (FYROM) was officially designated candidate country at the end of 2006. However, «black holes» do persist especially in Bosnia Herzegovina and Kosovo.

A new qualitative jump was noticed regarding regional cooperation and European and Euro- Atlantic integration. It was registered in May 2007, when a new organization was announced at Zagreb, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), succeeding to the Stability Pact. This organization coordinated by Austrian Erhard Busek has its headquarters in Sarajevo and is scheduled to start up in early 2008. There is an important semantic difference where the term «stabilization» gives way to an effective cooperation and development.

This new phase of regional cooperation means that the countries in the region will have the right and the obligation to be more active in the choice of priorities and cooperation mechanisms. Recently in September 2007, an agreement was signed in Plovdiv (Bulgaria) with Bosnia-Herzegovina where the new Coun-

cil on the secretariat of the new organization, will be received. Hido Bisevic, Croatia's Foreign Affairs Secretary of State was appointed the first Secretary-general of the RCC⁷⁵.

Conclusion

In a world of accelerated change, many questions have yet to be defined in this region located in the 'heart of Europe'. In recent months, Russia has been 'drifting away' from the West, whereas the EU institutional crisis may have compromised its alleged calling as a 'global player'. The new draft Treaty of the Union limits its international political representation and reduces its diplomatic agenda. The principal beneficiary is the United States apparently admitting solely a subordinate collaboration from the Europeans, although the general existence of protectorates in the Balkans has enabled an external determinant function for the Euro-Atlantic Institutions.

In fact, US diplomacy has exploited the Yugoslav crisis in Bosnia- Herzegovina (Dayton agreement, November 1995) and during the failed Rambouillet and Paris negotiations on Kosovo (6/23 February and 15/19 March 1999) to maintain, redefine and expand NATO's action field and insert the European construction in the Atlantic framework. The goal is the parallel and

⁷⁵ Serbia, Kosovo, and also Montenegro, Bósnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia (FYROM), Albania and Croatia are directly involved in this regional project, with Bulgaria and Romania, already full member-States of the EU. Regarding the cooperation initiatives for Southeast Europe, see the book of current Serbia's Ambassador in Lisbon Dusko Lopandic, *Regional Initiatives in South Eastern Europe*. European Movement in Serbia. Institute for International Politics and Economy. Belgrade, 2001, and also the document of Jelica Minic e Jasminka Kronja, *Regional Co-Operation for Development and European Integration*, Belgrade, Podgorica, Prishtina, Sarajevo, Skopje, Tirana, Zagreb, European Movement in Serbia, Belgrade, 2007.

co-ordinated integration of all the Balkan countries in NATO and EU.

Kosovo is the Union's next and decisive 'regional' test, included in a process of European construction that shows some weaknesses. In the multi-ethnic Balkans, the imposition of agreements has never succeeded without the consent of all parties involved. And the projects of creating dubious 'micro-states' may bring about more tension.

One of the most far — reaching steps of the European project was the abolition of borders, the reinforcement of regionalism, the increase of global exchange and the establishment of a single market. And Kosovo, more than just Serbia's own business, is a history of Europe itself. Unlike the concept of sovereignty or new flags that contradict the European project, some mechanisms should be activated to find comprehensive solutions through an approach to common interests, such as commerce, education, communication paths and telecommunications... especially in a region like Kosovo with Europe's highest unemployment rate, about 70% of the population, which at the same time is one of the youngest (average age is around 30).

The issue of sovereignty in the suggested form of supervised independence or through a 'confederation of sovereign states' would only postpone the problem without actually resolving it. Besides nationalism there are many common projects that should be consolidated through bilateral or multilateral agreements, where the Regional Co-operation Council (RCC) may play a fundamental role. However, Brussels appears unable to promote a truly European approach and apparently some of the more influential member-states limit themselves to following the US policy for the region.

NATO's intervention in the Serbian province of Albanese majority is being seen as a conquest, a 'fait accompli'. But rather than promoting the strengthening of multi-ethnicity since 1999,

the international presence has accelerated ethnic cleansing in the region. The consequences of this poorly conducted process may be damaging and even reinforce radical nationalisms in Belgrade, in Pristina or in Skopje.

Hence, Kosovo is only the tip of an iceberg and any decision emerging as a 'diktat' will provoke immediate 'shock waves' which will reflect on the surrounding regions, in Macedonia, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in Albania and even beyond... The credibility of a common defense and security policy is here at stake. Again, in the Balkans.

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The European Union in Turkey: aligning security perceptions?

ANDRÉ BARRINHA⁷⁶

Turkey is a military, demographic, geographical and potentially economic power, bordering complex countries such as Iran, Iraq and Syria and with a largely Muslim population (99%). In that sense, Ankara's accession process to the European Union (EU) involves questions and problems that go far beyond any of the previous enlargement processes, with the arguable exception of the United Kingdom's adhesion in 1973.

Although official relations between Turkey and the EU date back to 1963, this relationship has only been developed in recent years with the accession process. For Ankara, this process has been about changing policies and practices that had been consolidated for decades; for Brussels, it has been about defining its place in the region and in the world.

Since 2003, 'neighborhood' has become a high-security term for Europe. In the European Security Strategy (ESS), presented in December 2003, there were two main actions that the EU should pursue in order to guarantee its security: first, to develop effective multilateralism; and second, to reinforce stability in its

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neighborhood. In that sense, the neighborhood is a security issue more than a social-economic problem for the EU. In addition, the EU policies for neighboring countries are nothing but the consequence of the EU 'securitisation'⁷⁷ of its neighborhood. Inadvertently or not, that process involves both the de-securitization of some issues for the neighboring countries in order to concentrate on other (or to re-securitize), more relevant issues to the EU (e.g. migration). For Brussels, conflicts must be solved, democracy developed, and market economy promoted all over its immediate vicinity in order to 'secure' itself. This is a 'fact', not open to discussion. As stated by Leonard (2004: 47), by helping to transform weak or autocratic states into well-governed allies, Europeans hope to be able to defend themselves from the greatest threats to their security.

Its neighbors must change both their structures and policies in order to see the world through more 'Europeanized' lenses.

The 2004 enlargement (not to mention Greece, Portugal and Spain's accession) was to a large extent done with this goal in mind: the stabilization of the neighborhood in order to guarantee its own security. The Central and Eastern European countries' adhesion was based on the need to consolidate those countries. If left outside for longer they could derail from the 'right' path; Cold War ghosts could return. As Higashino (2004: 364) concludes from his study on the connection between the Eastern European enlargement and security, "it was the power of security discourse which pushed the EU strongly in the direction of enlargement". It is the power of security that is also pushing the EU in the direction of Turkey. As the Enlargement Commissioner Oli Rehn stated in a recent speech at the NATO

⁷⁷ Securitization is a process in which an issue becomes 'a security issue'. In the same sense, de-securitisation is a process in which an issue stops being defined as a security issue (cf. Wæver 2000, and Buzan; Wæver; de Wilde, 1998).

Parliamentary Assembly (2006): “Turkey’s membership is in our strategic interest”.

Thus, this paper’s focus will be on the way Turkey has been aligning those perceptions with EU’s and how that harmonization process matters to the EU. Hence, we will start by an analysis of the scope of Ankara’s EU-conditioned reforms, with special emphasis on the security sector; the EU’s involvement in Turkey’s defined security issues will then be examined. We will then conclude with some remarks on the inter-play of these two dynamics.

A long relationship

12th September 1963. Turkey and the then European Economic Community (EEC) signed an Association Agreement with the goal of establishing a Customs Union and foreseeing the possibility of Turkish adhesion to the EEC. This document was the basis for the relationship between these two political units throughout the following decades, even though political instability in Turkey dictated that the relationship would only assume a relevant role from the late 1980s onwards⁷⁸. In 1987 Turkey applied for full membership but had to wait two years until it was given a negative response by the European Commission in 1989.

The 1990s saw further important developments in this relationship. In 1996, the Customs Union was finally activated and in 1999, at the Helsinki European Council, Turkey was finally given the status of ‘candidate to candidate’. This came two years after the huge setback of 1997 when Turkey saw its membership bid refused once more. In order to be accepted as a candidate, Tur-

⁷⁸Due to the 1980 military coup, relations between Turkey and Brussels were suspended from 1980 until 1983 when the Turkish military forces returned power to civilian control.

key would have to comply with the Copenhagen Criteria by undertaking deep and potentially painful reforms. By the end of 2004, progress would define whether Turkey could become an EU candidate member.

On 6th October 2004, the European Commission released its recommendation stating that Turkey 'satisfactorily' fulfilled the Copenhagen Criteria. Two months later, on 17th December, the European Council set 3rd October 2005 as the date for the beginning of the accession negotiations. Since then the negotiations have advanced under strong political instability, with several negotiation dossiers frozen during the Finnish Presidency due to EU demands on Turkey regarding the opening of its ports to Cyprus.

1999-2007: time to reform

Independently of the recent course of the negotiations, Turkey has undertaken a series of reforms since 1999 in order to accommodate the EU demands on the fulfilment of the Copenhagen Criteria. On March 19th 2001, the Turkish government launched its National Programme where it detailed the necessary steps towards Turkey's reform, according to EU standards (Dorrnsoro, 2004: 53). Seven months later, the Turkish Constitution had 34 articles revised: prevention of torture, freedom of speech, freedom of association, and equality between men and women were among the individual rights introduced or underlined in the revision (idem: 53-54). These and other reforms were implemented in the years to follow, essentially through 'harmonization packages' elaborated by the government and approved by Parliament.

A large bulk of those reforms also affected the security sector, essential for the re-definition of Turkey's security perception. To

that end, important measures were taken especially regarding the composition of the National Security Council (NSC). Although it had existed before with different names and less powers, after the 1960s coup, the NSC became a major institution, arguably the institution, within the Turkish political system. Within the NSC, the military usually had the last say on a whole set of issues, the ones they defined as relevant. Regarding security, it is this body that has been responsible for defining the Turkish National Security Policy Document (NSPD), a secret document to which only a few have access.

In an amendment to Article 118, the number of civilian representatives in the NSC changed from five to nine and its usually forgotten advisory status highlighted. Henceforth, the NSC would consist of: President, Prime Minister, the Chief of General Staff, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers of Justice, National Defense, Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Land, Naval and Air Forces Commander Generals and the General Commander of Gendarmerie.

In 2003, more measures were adopted with the goal of diminishing the role of the Turkish Armed Forces in the political sphere. With the 7th Harmonization Package, the military exclusivity for the post of NSC Secretary General (SG) was abrogated, as were its extended executive and supervisory powers, e.g. the provision empowering the SG to follow up the implementation of any recommendation made by the NSC on behalf of the President and the Prime Minister. Also, the frequency of NSC's meetings was modified from monthly to every two months. In addition, the military were excluded from the Council of Higher Education and Higher Council of Radio and Television, as the provision that allowed unlimited access of the NSC to any civilian agency was also abrogated.

Further measures were taken in order to curb the military political power. For instance, the transparency of defense expenditures was enhanced and the Court of Auditors was given albeit

limited authorization to audit accounts and transactions of all types of organizations including state properties owned by the Turkish Armed Forces. Additionally, following the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights against Turkey, State Security Courts (Devlet Güvenlik Mahkemeleri, DGM) were abolished in 2004.

These measures have obviously not produced immediate results in terms of military involvement in Turkish politics⁷⁹ or in Turkish security perceptions, but they have prepared the ground for a structural change in the Turkish security sector.

Turkey's security challenges and the EU involvement

Security, as defined by Turkish authorities, is a broad and ambivalent concept. According to Article 2 of Law No. 2945 on NSC and the NSC General Secretariat, "national security" means (apud Arslan, 2006: 26):

[the] preservation and protection against the collective internal and external threats to the constitutional order of the state, its national existence, integrity, all of its political, social, cultural and economic interests and contractual rights in the international arena.

Such a security conception could therefore be applied to almost any issue, in almost any context. This definition is materialized in the above mentioned National Security Policy Document (NSPD). This document is prepared by the General Staff with the help of the NSC's Secretary General and discussed in the NSC

⁷⁹ As shown by the recent political crisis (May-July 2007) which led to the disablement of the Parliament and the call for early elections.

meetings. The document is classified as top secret and its content is not subject to public scrutiny. Despite the secrecy, all the recent versions of the document have eventually been leaked to the press (idem: 28).

The 1997 NSPD, for example, listed Greece and the neighboring South as the main foreign threats, while fundamentalism, separatism and organized crime were defined as the main challenges to internal security. In the latest version of the document, the 2005 edition, fundamentalism and separatism were once again at the top of internal priorities, while the Greek “tendency to extend the limits of its territorial waters was a *casus belli*” (idem: 29).

As we can see, although the focus has officially been on the internal threats, Turkey’s neighborhood remains an issue of concern. In practice, the unstable geopolitical context has not allowed Turkey to de-securitize some of its most prominent security issues, as the EU would prefer. The PKK dramatically increased its activities, taking Turkey to the brink of a Northern Iraq intervention; Cyprus became a complex issue in Ankara’s relationship with Brussels; Iran, a neighbor with whom Turkey has an ambivalent relationship, is globally accused of trying to acquire nuclear military capabilities; Iraq is completely unstable; and Lebanon, Israel and Palestine are producing increasing levels of instability to the whole Middle East. Still, and despite this context, there are noticeable changes regarding Turkey’s policy to the region.

In effect, Turkey has been developing an image of stabilizing actor in the Middle East. Relations with Syria have improved and Iran is now a partner in fighting the Kurdish insurgency movements, even if Ankara is absolutely against the Iranian position on the nuclear issue. Even so, more than once Turkey has offered to act as mediator between Teheran and the West. Besides, Turkey is heavily involved in the UN’s Mission in Lebanon contributing with 500 soldiers, after having been

strongly considered as a possible leader of the mission during the creation of the force.

Turkey is also developing stronger links with its Black Sea neighbors. Ankara is now part of a confidence-building plan, jointly with Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, and Ukraine, with the goal of creating a standing naval force with a permanent headquarters, replacing the current Black Sea Naval Co-operation Task Group (Sariibrahimođlu, 2005: 29).

Nevertheless, while Turkey's stabilizing role in the Middle East has been developing it has also been considering intervening in Northern Iraq in order to eliminate the PKK safe-heaven, a security priority, thus potentially contributing to the further destabilization of Iraq and consequently the whole region. As such, this positive international attitude is embraced by Turkey inasmuch as it does not consider itself threatened. In fact, Turkey remains extremely suspicious of some of its neighbors and even maintains open disputes with some of them — like Cyprus or Armenia. Internally, it still links its own security to the maintenance of a certain cultural homogeneity and territorial unity.

Such an attitude and behavior towards security starkly contrasts with that of the European Union. Indeed, Brussels identifies less territorialized and nationalized threats. As Matlary (2006: 108) argues,

[s]ecurity policy in Europe is both de-territorialized and de-nationalized. Most use of European military power takes place far from national borders and does not involve territorial expansion, occupation or conquest.

The single security issue on which Turkey is totally aligned with the EU perception is regarding peace operations. Turkey has been very active in this field; this activism is not only related to UN and NATO led missions, but also to ESDP operations. For

instance, Ankara participated in missions in Bosnia, Macedonia, and Congo, and has demonstrated the will to be an ever-present partner in this kind of operation.

But in what way has the EU directly⁸⁰ contributed to a change in Turkey's security perceptions?

Just by focusing on the arguably three main security issues — Kurdish conflict, Cyprus, and secularism — we would reach the conclusion that EU's behaviour can be seen as ambivalent at best, and in some cases even counter productive. Cyprus has become a paramount issue in the Brussels-Ankara negotiations, largely due to Brussels. The decision to assure Cyprus of its membership independently of the UN-sponsored referendum led the Greek Cypriots to vote 'No' (76%) to the island's re-unity according to the Comprehensive Settlement Plan proposed by the UN. On the contrary, due to strong pressures from Ankara the Turkish Cypriots largely voted in favour (65%) of the Plan that would eventually lead to the island's reunification (Eralp and Beriker, 2005). As a result the problem is yet to be solved and became a major issue in the talks between Brussels and Ankara and the negotiations were almost entirely suspended due to Turkey's insistence in not open its port to Cyprus.

The Kurdish issue has re-emerged as a major security threat to the country, since the end of the cease-fire declared by the Kurdish guerrilla movement, PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) in 2004. The EU has been consistently criticized by Ankara for allowing large fluxes of money and arms to reach the guerrillas, even though Brussels included the movement in its list of terrorist organizations list in 2002 (Mango, 2005). Greece prior support to the movement, Italy's ambiguous position regarding Abdullah Ocalan's (the PKK leader) capture, and other countries' loose

⁸⁰ By 'directly' we mean the use of policies or actions directly linked to a problem's solution, rather than an attempt to change the whole structure.

stance on the organization, have led Turkish officials to accuse the EU and more broadly, the European countries, of not helping Turkey. According to Ismail Cem, a former Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs (*apud* Mango, 2005: 87),

I believe that West Europeans have a share in the responsibility for the ethnic and separatist terrorism that Turkey faced in the 1980's and in the 1990's. This does not relieve Turkey's political leadership of its own responsibility, due to mismanagement. Nevertheless, the Western political elite and media by their misunderstandings and prejudices, sometimes by their animosity, contributed fully to the tragedies that Turkey went through.

The 'religious threat' has acquired an ambiguous stance since November 2002, when AKP (Justice and Development Party) won the Parliament majority in Turkey. On the one hand, the more secular sectors of Turkish society have become less nervous about the prospects of a political party that is strongly identified with Islam ruling the country; on the other, they are still very sensitive to any policy that wishes to further the role of religion in the country. In the recent political crisis in Turkey, the EU took a very neutral position arguing for the peaceful and democratic unfolding of the crisis, and harshly criticizing the military for their threats of a military coup.

In short, and regarding Turkey, the central focus of the EU is not necessarily on the direct contribution to the resolution of this country's perceived security problems, but instead on the structural aspects of the security policy-making sector. In that sense, it could be argued that the EU's goal is not to de-securitize, but instead to re-securitize Turkey in a structural way. It is not only about making them have the same security priorities; it is about making them follow the same processes when

approaching those priorities. Whether or not it is possible to achieve this without considering and effectively approaching the current perceptions is an open question with an a priori negative answer. Indeed, it seems difficult to change a security structure when the ‘threats’ for which that structure was built are still ‘out there’.

Conclusion

As already seen in previous chapter, and made perfectly clear in the ESS, the EU global actorness is linked with the stabilization of its neighborhood (whether or not potential member states). The way to accomplish it is not only to make them more democratic and market oriented but also to align their security perceptions with the EU’s own security perceptions.

Basically, the EU prefers that its neighboring countries securitize issues that go according to the EU priorities, instead of focusing on other security issues that are irrelevant to Brussels. The EU has, as Wæver (2000: 260) says, a “silent disciplining power on ‘the near abroad’”. Even if they are not eligible for membership, the EU tries to make those countries “look more like the EU itself” (Rynning, 2003: 483).

In the Turkish case, those perceptions are still far from being aligned, even though structural reforms are being undertaken and Turkey is an important international actor when it comes to peace operations. Efforts have been focused mainly on changing its civil-military relations, on changing the structure of Turkish security. Oddly enough, that has been done without deep considerations for the current outcomes of that structure, i.e. the way Turkey defines and approaches its threats. This mismatch may lead to the EU’s failure in re-securitizing Turkey along its own lines, which would be a harsh blow to Brussels’ aspirations of

harmonizing its neighborhood security perceptions, and eventually in enhancing its international role: “[a] failure of Turkey would be a failure for the European Union, while a successful Turkey will give the European Union the chance to become a true world player, a force for stability, democracy and prosperity” (Rehn, 2005).

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The European Union, Africa and crisis management

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Introduction

Ties binding what is now the European Union⁸² to Africa date back to the early days of the European integration process, namely the 1960s when the ‘Six’ founding members of the European Communities decided to set up a post-colonial contractual arrangement initially conceived to secure a dialogue with a group of developing African countries towards sustainable economic and social development. At the time, while being deeply informed by historic and cultural links connecting former Euro-

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⁸² In the early 1970s the organisation that was originally referred to as the European Communities or the European Economic Community (EEC) came to be known as the European Community (EC). When the Maastricht Treaty came into force on 1 November 1993, the latter was transformed into the European Union (EU). Although throughout this chapter the terminology will shift depending on the time period at issue, when referring to the integration process, more generally, it will be described as the EU.

pean colonial powers (especially France) to former colonies, the European approach was indeed dominated by eminently economic and trade concerns and objectives. The Yaoundé Agreement⁸³ and its successors, that is, the Lomé Conventions which structured the relationship between the EU and associated states from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) during a quarter of a century upheld the economic and social development focus⁸⁴. The latter was upgraded in the sequence of the replacement of the Lomé Conventions by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement in 2000, specific room being created for breeding deep political dialogue with the building of political stability and democracy within ACP states in view.

The EU, however, has devoted considerable attention to the African continent in recent years. The traditional development cooperation typified by a variegated range of trade and aid instruments was complemented by an active security cooperation and assistance as tangible engagement in conflict prevention, management and resolution since 2003 visibly intimates. The establishment (within the framework of the EU) of a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) in 1999 has largely contributed to this as did the promulgation of a European Security Strategy (ESS) in 2003 which strategically targeted Africa as a regional testing ground for the organization's capability, efficacy and credibility as a foreign policy player. External stimuli have had an additional bear on a more salient African agenda. Among these one should stress, first, the increased strategic interest exhibited by the United States vis-à-vis Africa and the growing economic Chinese presence in the region; and, second, the perceived

⁸³ The two Yaoundé Conventions were signed in 1964 and 1971 with 18 associated African states and Madagascar.

⁸⁴ The first Lomé Convention was signed in 1975 between the then nine member states of the EEC and 46 ACP countries while the IV Lomé Convention involving 70 ACP partners expired in February 2000.

necessity to address common complex challenges with high security resonance relating to issues ranging from illegal migration and illicit traffic of small arms and light weapons (SALW) to climate change. To be sure, the perceived limited impact of the traditional development policies upon the recipient countries accentuated the need to complement the previous formula with or give priority to a security approach. On the part of Africa, the emergence of the African Union (AU) which in 2002 replaced the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) reinforced the conviction that conditions existed to instil renewed vigour in the European commitment to project political stability and peace in Africa. By 2003, the launch of the first European autonomous military operation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (RDC), ARTEMIS, and the setting up by the EU of a financing scheme — the Peace Facility for Africa (PFA)⁸⁵ — to strengthen the capacity of the AU to engage in peacekeeping and peace-supporting operations in Africa featured as the first tangible indication of that. Equally symptomatic was the formulation of a European Strategy for Africa in December 2005 which along with the launching of operations EUSEC RDONGO and EUPOL Kinshasa in the RDC, and AMIS II in Sudan during that same year clearly accorded the ESDP with an African *élan*.

The central aim of this chapter, which will engage in the current academic extensive debate on the evolving international role of the EU is to examine the evolution of the EU's policy towards Africa which until recently has been defined principally through the ACP prism. It will also shed analytical light upon the EU's engagement in crisis management on the continent in discussing the rationale that underpins the recent military and civil ESDP operations. This requires a brief revisit to the European

⁸⁵ Money allocated to the PFA comes from the European Development Fund under the Cotonou agreement.

development policy towards Africa under the umbrella of Lomé and Cotonou Agreements before focusing on the EU's missions in the region, their major contours and implications for both future EU-Africa relations and the EU's role on global politics. The chapter ends with some remarks on the most recent initiatives directed at enhancing a broader Euro-African dialogue.

EU's policy towards Africa: from development cooperation to political dialogue and security assistance

The first Lomé Convention signed in 1975 upon the impetus of Britain's membership is generally considered as marking the beginning of the EEC's de facto Development Policy at a time when de jure competencies in this field were totally absent from the Community's legal text (Marsh and Mackenstein, 2005: 227). Former African colonies with EEC country connections were at the centre of such dynamics designed to promote cooperation in trade as well as both financial and technical assistance. Throughout more than two decades, under the auspices of Lomé II, III and IV an economic relationship was sustained with a growing number of associated African countries which came to benefit from privileged access to EC's markets and annual STABEX payments — although this did not take place without disadvantageous exceptions (related to agrarian products) and insufficient loans and grants, correspondingly.

It should be noted that the Lomé IV which was negotiated during 1988/89, against the backdrop of momentous changes in Europe, introduced an important innovation: an explicit political conditionality provision (Article 5) which was expanded in 1995 to encompass the respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance. While the imposition of these conditions, whose non-observance could bring about the suspension of

assistance, represented the end of a taboo in the EU's development policy (Holland, 2004: 279), it was judged to engender an erosion of the concept of equal partnership which systematically governed the Lomé relationship. This reflected well the new priorities of post-Cold War EU, namely a growing commitment to Eastern Europe to the detriment of the ACP Group (Bretherton and Vogler, 2006: 121).

Collaboration between the EU and African partners continued under the umbrella of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement signed in June 2000 in the aftermath of the historic first EU-Africa Summit held in Cairo, in April, which renewed the commitment of both the European and African states towards collaboration in the domains of peace building and conflict management while inaugurating a more structured political dialogue based on regular meetings of senior officials and ministers. As is commonly acknowledged, this third generation of agreements opened up a new chapter in the EU-ACP rapport (Holland, 2004; Marsh and Mackenstein, 2005: 229-231; Bretherton and Vogler, 2006: 122-123). To be sure, this was indicated by a shift from the previous emphasis placed on the inter-bloc trade (i.e. between EU and ACP countries) to an emphasis accorded to intra-ACP countries trade; and by the quantitative increase of development aid and the conclusion of the so-called regional Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the EU and ACP partners based on the principle of reciprocity in trade concessions and aimed at encouraging regional economic integration. In particular, it was also revealed by the introduction of an extended political dimension within which a comprehensive political dialogue around initiatives and strategies conceived to address conflict prevention and conflict resolution and, ultimately, to promote stability and peace across African countries stood out as a key pillar (Marsh and Mackenstein, 2005: 231-232; Holland, 2004: 277-288). Novel references to peace building and conflict prevention in the

Cotonou's text constituted a natural consequence of the incorporation of development goals within the realm of CFSP, something that also ascribed the development policy a political character (Holland, 2004: 288). In addition, dispositions on human rights, democracy and the rule of law, as inherited from the Lomé IV political conditionality *acquis*, was given enhanced prominence as part of this political dialogue. Through these conditionalities, whose legal perimeter was extended at the insistence of the European states to encompass a ground-breaking provision on good governance and corruption (Ibid: 287), the EU gained an unprecedented sway over the Partnership.

All this reflected an increased concern with political and security issues, namely with the promotion of democratic governance and dialogue on peace building and conflict prevention among ACP associates, in general, and African states in particular (Bretherton and Vogler, 2006: 124 and 126). In the sequence of amendments introduced in 2005 in the context of a mid-term revision, the Cotonou Agreement reinforced the political dimension of the original text and provided for a systematic dialogue with each associate country (Gibert, January 2007: 33).

While hinting to a gradual prioritization of security and political cooperation to the detriment of the classical exclusive focus on development assistance, the Cotonou political *acquis* provided the doctrine, method and framework within which the EU has committed itself to military and civil action in troubled spots of Africa since 2003.

Africa as a regional laboratory of the EU's assertion as an international security actor: from Saint Malo to Congo

Before the Cotonou Agreement saw the light of day, however, some commentators had judged that Africa was targeted from the

early stages of the European security and defence dynamics. Indeed, it is noted that the Franco-British convergence attained in the Saint Malo Declaration of December 1998, which sealed an understanding of these two key European actors around the building up of a European defence capacity, already comprise a commitment between France and Britain to work together in Africa (Groom, January 2005).⁸⁶

By then the impact of both the disengagement of international community from African security problems and the growing number of intrastate violent conflicts on the continent⁸⁷, which thwarted Europeans efforts to support development, had already been felt while urging for a more active EU security approach (Faria, 2004: 7). Subsequent changes in the African institutional architecture, namely the creation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) at the OUA Summit in summer 2001 and the transformation of the OAU into the AU in the following year imparted important signals as to the Africans' resolve to address their own security problems through conflict prevention and management initiatives and peace-support programmes.

The chronic lack of financial resources and the weak operational capabilities faced by the African states, but also the not so well known high rate of HIV/AIDS affecting military personnel in the region (Ibid: 14) — with direct consequence to the AU's plans to play a stronger role in conflict related situations — generated both a challenge and opportunity for a EU in quest of a credible security role on the international stage. To be sure, this window of challenge and opportunity presented itself at a time

⁸⁶ A joint non-paper presented by France and Britain back in 1994 had originally pointed to the need for the EU to support African capacities for conflict preventions and crisis management.

⁸⁷ Among these the conflicts in Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire stand out.

when, in sequence of the institutionalisation of its ESDP between 1999 and 2000, the EU was seriously engaged in the process of building up its own military capabilities with a 2003 horizon, notably the creation of a force of 60,000 troops, deployable within 60 days, sustainable for a year in support of humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking (i.e. Petersberg Tasks), as part of the so-called Headline Goal 2003. Unprecedented room indeed emerged for the EU to assist African states (and also regional and subregional organizations) in carrying their own burden in terms of local peacekeeping and crisis management.

Instruments provided by the developing ESDP came to amplify the already varied spectrum of complementary tools (i.e. economic, legal and political) at the disposal of the EU to promote structural development, stability and peace on the continent. This constitutes a comparative advantage for the EU vis-à-vis other international organizations engaged in security and peace-related programmes, as highlighted by the ESS 'A secure Europe in a better world' prepared by Javier Solana in the aftermath of the Anglo-American intervention in Iraq and adopted by the European Council in December 2003 (Council of the European Union, December 2003).

Incidentally, the rhetorical commitment contained in the ESS stressed the European states' determination to play a global politico-military role to the benefit of international peace and security. This implicitly involved playing a part in the containment or resolution of violent conflicts on the African continent. Beyond rhetoric, as evinced, the perceived failure of development policies and the mounting number of violent conflicts in the region with a disruptive impact on the EU in such areas as migration, organized crime and terrorist activities called for a pro-active security approach on the part of the European states. Threat assessment pinpointing terrorism, proliferation of Weapons of

Mass Destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime as the key threats to European peace and security, again, inherently identified Africa as one the most eligible regions for the Union's undertakings towards a more 'secure Europe' and a 'better world' under the evolving ESDP.

A more active engagement in crisis management by the EU in Africa was given a concrete start with an operation launched in June 2003 in Bunia, in the Eastern part of DRC, on the political impetus of the UN's Secretary-General. This mission, coded ARTEMIS, was the first fully autonomous crisis management (military) operation outside Europe. It took place in the framework of a Security Council's resolution authorizing the deployment of a European interim emergency multinational force led by France (acting as the Framework Nation). Consigned to a limited mandate both in time and space⁸⁸, and almost exclusively based on French fighting force and military capacities, this mission was devised to prepare the ground for the UN to launch a reinforced MONUC mission.

Three years later another European military mission was carried out on Congolese soil. The EUFOR involved the deployment of an EU force over a period of four months to support MONUC during the period of the first democratic elections since the independence of the DRC. Between those two operations, the EU was engaged in providing civilian-military support to the AU's operation AMIS II in Darfur (Sudan)⁸⁹ and set off two ESDP

⁸⁸ Operation ARTEMIS lasted until 1 September 2003 and its mandate was confined to the city of Bunia.

⁸⁹ The main EU contribution has included the following elements: provision of equipment and assets, military observers, technical assistance, training of African troops and police officers, coordinated strategic airlift for more than 2000 AU's troops in the Darfur Operation; and the mobilization of aid funds of around one billion euros (part of the money being directed towards refugees in the camps in neighboring Chad).

missions aimed at supporting the Security Sector Reform (SSR) in the DRC: the EUPOL Kinshasa and the EUSEC RD Congo. On one hand, the EUPOL Kinshasa aimed at setting up an integrated police unit in the capital city and through monitoring and advising ensured that it acted according to international best practice; on the other, the EUSEC Congo was conceived to provide advice and assistance to the country's authorities in charge of national security. This new strategy relating to the field of SSR contains enormous potential as a conflict prevention instrument since efforts towards establishing a security sector capable of countering rebel movements or preventing their formation can indeed prevent the resurgence of intra-state violence.

In enabling the ESDP to gain unprecedented dynamism on African soil, all these expeditionary operations helped the EU to improve its role in the African security complex and augur well for future European peace-support initiatives. Despite having visibly demonstrated the shortcomings of the European available capacities and reflected major difficulties for the use of the ESDP forces to go beyond the low-level peacekeeping or bridging operations (to facilitate UN interventions) and civilian crisis management (Griffin, 2007: 42), they had a bearing on the strengthening of the perception of the EU as a global political actor capable of making a tangible contribution to international peace and security.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ At the time this chapter was being produced, in the sequence of the UN's approval in September 2007 of a deployment of an international force provided by the UN and EU in eastern Chad and the north-eastern part of the Central African Republic, the EU's was engaged in continued planning of the operation and have already begun a concrete phase generating European forces. The involved 'multidimensional' presence will have a military component assured by the EU and a law enforcement component for which the UN will be responsible. This EU-UN mission which is expected to run for one year in Chad and the northeastern Central African Republic was originally proposed by France. See <http://www.alertnet.org>

Towards a political partnership with Africa: implications and prospects

While the European engagement in Africa has been sustained since the early stages of the integration experiment, there is ample evidence that the EU only came to pay undivided and specific attention to Africa and its security problems over the last decade. The tone and major principles⁹¹ guiding a more comprehensive thinking on Africa politics and security, associating economic development, democratization and peace, was set by the Commission that in 1996 produced a Communication to the Council on conflicts in Africa. The latter came to constitute the foundation of the Commission's approach to the issue of violent crisis and conflict on the continent and undoubtedly contributed to defining the EU's role in conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa.⁹²

The political and security dimension informed by a holistic understanding of (economic and social) development in Africa, as consolidated in the Cotonou Agreement of 2000, was acknowledged in the EU's strategic partnership for Africa agreed upon by the Council in December 2005. This strategy "of the whole of the EU for the whole of Africa" (Council of the European Union, December 2005) delineates the steps that the EU intends to undertake until 2015 to support African efforts towards demo-

thenews/newsdesk/L29168266.htm; and http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/country-files_156/central-african-republic_188/adoption-of-the-resolution-1778-security-council-approves-un-presence-in-eastern-chad-and-north-eastern-central-african-republic-25.09.07_10038.html (both accessed on 10 October 2007).

⁹¹ The five major principles are as follows: principle of ownership, principle of prevention, principle of early warning and principle of coherence.

⁹² More recently the European policy towards conflict prevention in Africa was somewhat streamlined in the framework of the Commission Communication of 2001 on Conflict Prevention and the EU Program on the Prevention of Violent Conflicts adopted at the Göteborg Council of June 2001.

cratic stability, sustainable development and security. Giving continuity to the African ownership and leadership credence, without which no lasting peace is conceivable, the new strategy resumes adherence to the traditional principles of partnership and equality while provisions on good governance, the respect of human rights and the rule of law feature prominently. European leaders committed themselves to supporting efforts of all major actors on the field — organizations and states alike — to promote peace and stability in the region. Not surprisingly, particular assistance was pledged to the AU through CFSP and ESDP activities (Ibidem).

The declared “strong interest” of EU regarding partnership with Africa that was reiterated in the December 2005 strategy (Ibidem) should be linked to three contemporary trends affecting both Europe and Africa. First, the need to tackle key transnational issues of common concern and interest, such as the illicit traffic of SALW, human trafficking, climate changes, illegal immigration and the management of non-renewable natural resources (with the combat of desertification standing out as an important matter), to mention only the most critical ones. Second, the growing competition of interests on African soil caused by the United States’ increased geo-strategic and military interests in the region as revealed by the establishment of a new system of military command in Africa (U.S Africa Command or AFRICOM)⁹³; and the growing economic presence of China in various African countries⁹⁴. Thirdly, there is the EU’s manifest ambition to enhance its visibility and international political leverage under the umbrella of both CFSP and ESDP.

⁹³ This new regionally-focused headquarters was formally established in October 2007.

⁹⁴ Among these are the following: Angola, Sudan, Chad, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, South Africa and Zimbabwe

As it is the Europeans those who left their cultural and linguistic mark on Africa's history and geography as a result of their colonial venture on the continent, and as the Europeans are the major donors to Africa it would ultimately be paradoxical if the EU was to lose ground in terms of political and economic influence in favour of China and the United States. On the other hand, as Africa is well-known for its long pedigree of (intra-state and inter-state) violent conflicts and volatile political structures, it offers a multitude of opportunities for the EU to unleash its potential, push ESDP objectives and subsequently achieve its ambition of asserting its political and military international actorness.

At the time of writing⁹⁵, political endeavours of critical importance were being undertaken, under the tutelage of the Portuguese Presidency of the EU (July-December 2007), towards the approval of a Joint Strategy EU-Africa. Building on the Cairo Summit *acquis*, the latter envisages "a more comprehensive strategy" between 'old partners in a world transformed'. The emergence of Africa as a "political actor of its own right", on one hand, and the assertion of an enlarged EU with a more ambitious international security role, on the other, called for a move "from a strategy *for* Africa towards a political partnership *with* Africa". This entailed the elevation of the EU cooperation with African states and organizations to a long-term strategic level so as to secure that the EU-Africa relationship gradually becomes "more political, more global and more equal" (Commission of the European Communities, 2007: 2).

In the likely event that a new key policy document issues from the Lisbon Summit of December 2007, it would be naïve to believe that the eventual implementation of the declared political commitments would not encounter major difficulties similarly to those emanating from the Cairo's deliberations or the policies

⁹⁵ This chapter was concluded on 12 October 2007 when preparations for the organization of the Second EU-Africa Summit were still under way.

outlined in the 2005 EU Strategy for Africa. Be that as it may, the new policy framework expected to be agreed upon in Lisbon has the potential to further mobilize EU support for Africa-led development and security endeavors and increase cooperation between the two continents for security in Africa.

Conclusion

When David Buchan published one of the first contemporary reflections in 1993 on the international role of the post-Cold War EU under the impetus of the newly established CFSP, no line was written about the European engagement on the African continent. At present, observations on the Euro-African dialogue and Union's engagement in conflict management in the region have become inescapable in any comprehensive analysis focusing on the EU's international relations.

Increasing European attention paid to Africa after the end of the Cold War and especially following the inauguration of ESDP in 1999 has led to the opening up of a new phase in the EU-Africa rapport which has come a long way since the first days of the Yaoundé regime. Traditional development aid efforts were gradually complemented, if not superseded, by growing political focus covering democratic governance and human rights as an integral part of structural endeavours to promote security and peace. Once set in motion at the operational level as of 2003, ESDP found on African soil a trial balloon for the newly assembled capacities for autonomous European military missions, for interoperability between (heterogeneous) European forces and, not least importantly, for the EU's ability to acquire flexible and mobile forces and respond rapidly to crisis.

This engagement can be read as exhibiting to some extent the EU's enthusiasm to reconstruct African politics and security as

well as relationships between African states in its own image; and appears to be informed by the goal of performing a sort of *mission civilisatrice* in the post-colonial, post-Cold War and post-11 September Africa through the promotion of adherence to common principles as a way of providing for political, economic and social development and, ultimately, for stability and peace.

More recently, the EU-Africa Strategy, launched five years after the Cairo Summit, was symptomatic of a new constructive politico-institutional climate while representing a first step in a process towards a strategic partnership of equals⁹⁶ — one that is expected to bolster under the aegis of the forthcoming Joint Strategy EU-Africa.

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Conclusion:
the EU in the world external action
without a foreign policy actor?

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This collection of papers seeks to cover the ground regarding the external action of the EU in its “near abroad”, to borrow a term so often used in reference to its undoubtedly most powerful and probably most problematic neighbor: Russia. In this last paper we will briefly draw some generic conclusions in terms of where the EU is in its relations with the rest of world and in particularly with its neighbors, and where it is most likely headed?

To Be or not to Be — the EU as an international actor

Hardly anyone would question that European institutions exert some influence abroad. What is more difficult to establish with precision is the significance of these external actions by the EU. The exercise becomes even more complex if we take into account the differential impact of integrated Europe in various other regions of the world, or in fields other than that of economic

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relations, upon which European integration was originally founded. There are also difficulties regarding the characterization of the very nature of its action. Is the EU sufficiently strategically driven? Does it manage to be sufficiently distinct, autonomous, coherent and effective to be considered a foreign policy actor in its own right? And how distinct, autonomous, coherent and effective does it need to be in order to qualify as a foreign policy actor?

In fact, the question that is being asked is how do we define — and perhaps need to redefine today and in relation to the EU — an international actor? The answer to this question is less obvious than it might appear. A point amply elaborated by the introductory essay to this collection of texts with a thorough conceptual and theoretical discussion of the notion of international actorness.

Here we will merely underline how important it is to realize that the problem of actorness is not “simply” theoretical. There may be those that are not convinced by that argument, that see no point — except as an academic chess-games — in asking whether the EU is an actor in the international system. The EU has an external action commissioner and representations abroad, it has a most significant global aid program and it yields exclusive trade negotiation prerogatives for the whole of Europe.

Yet it is from within the EU’s institutions themselves that question of how to improve European actorness in foreign policy is raised, implicitly recognizing its current limitations. A recent Commission document has pointed to the key criteria for the EU to become a proper international actor — coherence and effectiveness (EU Commission — 2006). It has also tried to address the perceived gap in the security field, not only with new tools but with an increased awareness of conflict resolution. The Reform Treaty with its “Foreign Minister” holds the promise of one man leading the way in external affairs and controlling or coordinating

all the main tools of foreign action served by a European foreign service and a military HQ. Kissinger would have someone to call in Europe. And yet the Treaty also raises the potential risk of too many chiefs and not enough Indians in EU external action — with a President of the Council, a President of the Commission and a High Representative and Vice-President of the Commission (EU Presidency of the Council 2007).

Of course, the problem of how to define an international actor was present at the creation of IR theory. Kenneth Waltz tried to solve it with the argument of the levels of analysis. Domestic politics matters, but the focus of international theory should be only at the international level, meaning inter-states (Waltz 1959; Waltz 1979).

The argument is not without logic, but it is only really sustainable as a guide to the analysis of international politics, when two conditions are met, as was explicitly assumed in traditional Realism. The first, is the normative principle of the necessary primacy of foreign policy over domestic concerns within the national State. And the second is the exclusivity of the national State in the stage of world politics. (Kennan 1985; Morgenthau, 1967).

This notion of the State as the exclusive and unitary international actor has, however, been strongly undermined, by the growing realization — going back to Bureaucratic Politics in the 1970s, now expressed in various Culturalist and Institutionalist approaches to global politics, not only in novel trends like Constructivism but even within so-called Neo-Classical Realism — of the importance of internal politics and domestic agendas in moving from material capabilities to actual international power and concrete policies (Zakaria, 1999; also AA.VV., 2000). Very much in alternative to Neo-Realism, Neo-Liberal theories of interdependence and regime theory, while accepting the importance of the international level of analysis, also tried to show the growing importance of international institutions in socializing States,

of international norms in molding their expectations, preferences and behavior (Keohane & Nye 2000; Krasner 1983; for more recent wider debates on international organizations see Barnett & Finnemore 2004; Duffield 2007).

The EU has been seen particularly significant in showing that it is possible to create norms, to set up institutions for cooperation under anarchy within an organizational setting that clearly is much more pro-active than simply being a convenient meeting point for its member States.

Therefore the critique of the notion of State actorness does not result merely from the increasingly obvious importance of non-State actors even in the *sanctum sanctorum* of security. It also results from the growing realization of how unsustainable the notion of the State as a unitary rational completely autonomous actor really is.

The EU is not a State. Still it is present in the select G8 meetings, and the Middle East Quartet and the Iranian Troika dealing with vital crisis today, either alongside some European States, or as their exclusive representative in the ever-more important trade negotiations namely at the level of the WTO. In so far as prosperity, the environment or bringing globalization under some kind of governance are concerned, the EU's role has tended to grow. A European actorness seems to be the only way to achieve the kind of critical mass that will make it possible to provide any kind of strategic direction to these global challenges, even to many who would traditionally not see much value in the EU, as is the case of Chris Patten (2006), a British conservative but with ample experience of international affairs.

It is therefore possible to argue that no matter how difficult the task and how varied the results of the effort to define what is an international actor today, to exclude the EU from international actorness would automatically raise questions about the appropriateness of that conceptualization given the evident importance of regionalism in general and of the EU in particular in current

world politics, including the security dimension. Something that even the traditionally “euro-skeptic” American Neo-Realists have taken note of, attributing major significance and predicting a continued growth of the role of the EU in the field of security in balancing the massive but uncertain power of the US (Posen 2007). On the other hand, the case can also be made that significance is not necessarily the same as actorhood. The EU impact on the behavior of state actors is not the same as the EU itself becoming a strong actor in global politics.

The best way to move on, therefore, is not to ask if the EU conforms with a given State script of the role of international actor. Rather it is to ask what kind of global actor the EU is? How does the EU play its part? Namely, how does the EU play its part in its immediate neighborhood, dealing with problems that are closest to it, at least in geographical terms, and therefore much more likely to have a large impact on European interests? This is the line we will follow, making some reference to the different case studies included in this volume.

EU — what kind of actor and neighbor today?

What kind of actor is the EU is illustrated by the way it deals with serious crises or major challenges in its near abroad. And the main conclusion of these papers is that it does not seem to be a very decisive actor. Not so in the Western Sahara, not so in dealing with Russia in general and in the Caucasus in particular, not so in dealing with the Palestinian question. Even in Kosovo, in effect an international protectorate largely ruled by Western Europeans, the ability of the EU to achieve its ultimate aims — an independent, minority-respectful State emerging in peace with the agreement of Serbia — is uncertain. But most clearly in that case, and also in the others, the EU is also neither completely

absent or irrelevant, even if it is sometimes, at least perceived as, absent-minded and erratic. It may be less than decisive or less than helpful in terms of the positions of a given side or of achieving a stable end-state; but it is at the same time surrounded by significant, if perhaps unrealistic expectations regarding what it could achieve if it was more effectively engaged. And the EU's effective presence is frequently sought by all or some of the parties that then try to mould and lobby it in the direction most convenient to its own aims. The EU is indeed often seen as the indispensable missing link for a positive resolution of existing problems, given its major impact on all its surrounding region, particularly economic. The exception is Russia, but in the sense that it seeks to contain EU power within certain bounds, not that it sees it as irrelevant or that it does not seek to engage with it, and influence it, even if through a divide and rule policy of attempt to build privileged relations with some EU countries.

Most of the crises and issues described here help to demonstrate that it is far from clear that the emergence of a European military HQ — even if it does become more of a standing coordinated operational command — and capabilities will be a silver bullet in terms of providing added security in the near abroad or enhanced actorness. Many of these complex crises and protracted conflicts are not amenable to simple military solutions. A unilateral European military intervention in most if not all of these cases would be unthinkable because of their intrinsic complexity. And this is independent of the nature of the EU's strategic culture or of its military tools. Even if the question of established preferences in how to deal with international problems should be taken into account in EU thinking on global politics as well as, of course, the prevailing restraining mood internationally regarding foreign armed interventions in the post-Iraq context. (Cornish & Edwards 2001; Meyer 2005). In other words, any notion that there are ready-made conflicts waiting for a European military tool to

deal with them, or indeed for a European diplomatic service to manage or solve, is deeply misguided.

At this more policy-oriented level of debate, however, the classical concern of the expectations capabilities gap identified by Christopher Hill (1993) still seems unavoidable. However, one crucial point in this debate always was — what were the expectations regarding the EU, what were the prevailing preferences of Europeans? Only for certain given aims could it be said that the EU lacked certain capabilities.

A longstanding argument in this debate was that the EU lacked key capabilities in order to be credible in the role of international actor, namely military tools. Yet there have also been those who have repeatedly argued that the EU will lose by acquiring a military capability and thus move away from a prized civilian dimension of its identity. But it is not inevitable that a more military capable Europe will necessarily become more militarized. Nor can it be argued that a military instrument necessarily undermines the normative dimension of European power. In fact, it may create the conditions for it to be taken more seriously. Military power and normative power as defining traits of EU actorness do not necessarily clash. More tools and more capabilities and clearer consensual aims through a number of Strategy papers may mean that Europe will be a more effective Peace-Keeper, Peace-Enforcer and Institution-Builder, better able to identify and try to engage early in potential troubled areas.

Human security doctrine is being presented explicitly as a strategic narrative that can indeed square this circle of the normative and military side of the EU. It has arguably informed EU decision-making, not least regarding the European Security Strategy, with the High Representative Solana inviting reflection on this by Mary Kaldor and others in 2003 and eventually leading to the much quoted book (Glaesius & Kaldor 2005; see Kaldor et al 2007).

Nevertheless, it has to be asked whether or not these changes in terms of greater institutional coherence with the Reform Treaty, if it comes into force, and of new military and diplomatic tools traditional reserved for the external action of States will change the nature of the EU as an international actor, or at least the way it is perceived.

A recent debate that dealt with those points revolved around EU as a normative or rather a civilizing and quasi-imperial power. If the EU is successful in becoming a more integrated actor, better able to cover all the relevant areas of external action including security, will this new global colossus inevitably transform the way European external action is developed and perceived? Will it tend to be seen as the advancement of a civilizing mission, a cover for defending its own interests and a particularly eminent role in global society? This was the essence of the debate between Manners (2006) and Diez (2006). Manners has a point when he highlights that in definitional terms the concepts of normative, civilian and civilizing power are perfectly distinct and that his approach was not only analytical but also itself normative (see also Manners 2002). Yet Diez (2006) does raise a crucial question – whether or not the EU is successful in continuing to define itself as a normative power will depend not only on its own behavior but also on how others perceive it, when it is becoming more militarized and integrated. Not least, because also and at the same time, the EU seems less and less able and willing to offer the prospect of enlargement to those who abide by its benchmarks and conditionalities.

The President of the European Commission seems, wittingly or not, to have pointed to the crux of the matter when he referred to the EU as having ‘the dimension of an empire’. He was careful enough to point out that this would make integrated Europe ‘the first non-imperial empire’, one that in effect lacked an imperialism dimension. (The Times 11.07.2007) Still the remark attracted

considerable controversy. And the crucial point is precisely to know whether it is possible to have one without the other, or perhaps even more problematically, without others perceiving such a colossal polity as potentially entertaining imperialist ambitions. Yet it may well be that the EU manages its military tool in a less militarized way than the US, especially in this post-Iraq context. And other powers may in fact welcome a relative rise of the EU in the security field as positively balancing other global actors, like the US or China, or other more threatening regional powers.

In sum, the EU has been a particularly active protagonist, if not always an unquestionably effective one, in the regions immediately adjacent to it. This is not exactly unexpected. But the intensity of EU relations with its neighbors and the way it has conditioned its near abroad conforms with a notion of an imperial polity as one that from a given centre conditions the internal and external policies of a given periphery. (Doyle 1986). It is not common for powerful States to be able to influence internal politics to the degree that EU has done in terms of its future member States being moulded by the *acquis communautaire*. The key question is whether this has not created excessive expectations that will not be realized in areas where security concerns and security apparatus are much stronger, and, above all, where the prospect of integration into the EU is very distant or completely absent.

A different actor for a changing international stage

Few would contest that this is a moment of transition, both internally in the EU and in terms of its external action and the wider global system. A number of questions come very much to the fore — from multipolarity and its potential impact on multi-lateral organizations and regionalism, to the question of new and/

or unconventional threats, or non-state global actors. (See e.g. Buzan 2004) This makes an evaluation of any international actor particularly difficult because the international stage is in a particularly complex state of flux. But some key aspects regarding the EU seem relatively clear.

Conflicts and crises in Europe's neighborhood and the evolution of its relations with Brussels will remain a key test case for the EU's external action

This was recognized by the EU when it made the Neighborhood Policy — with a particular attention to the prevention and effective dealing with violent conflicts — a key driving force in its effort to become a more effective international actor. The spectacle of European impotence in the initial stages of the Wars of Yugoslav Secession (1991-1999), particularly the massacre of Srebrenica, was an important turning point for the sets taken towards the development of a European Security and Defence Policy. It was no coincidence the fact that the Summit of Saint-Malo took place in 1999. This was the year of NATO's intervention in Kosovo clouded by much American reluctance to do so. Key EU decision-makers, including for the first time the UK, decided that Europe needed to acquire an autonomous military capability in order to defend a security dimension that, in fact, had always been central to the EU's identity — as pacifier of the European continent. If the EU is indeed to be a force for good, peace and justice in its neighborhood, so the argument goes, it needs military tools to manage its security dimension. Not to do so would have inevitable spill-over effects, from waves of refugees to the undermining of its normative legitimacy and effectiveness. This trend to make EU actorness converge with that of traditional States by engaging it in the security field seems strong enough, and probably will be reinforced by a relative retreat of the US from the conflict termination business for the next few years.

However, there are good reasons that explain why the EU has long remained a normative, civilian, predominantly economic actor. Its exemplary nature and the potentially significant economic gains of European integration were ways of making this challenge to the State's exclusive role on the international stage seem more acceptable. It is certainly a big challenge and a significant political risk to make the EU responsible for potentially costly military expeditions abroad, particularly because it is far from certain that these new means will translate into clear gains in international effectiveness, while expectations of European public opinion and the international community are bound to grow.

The human security doctrine seeks to address this concern. But while it can do so quite effectively at the discourse level, it may well make the management of expectations surrounding the use of military force by the EU even harder; by making it imperative that these humanitarian wars keep collateral damage i.e. civilian casualties at an extremely low threshold. This may be easier said than done. Especially if European forces come face to face with well-organized irregular forces, as is the case in Afghanistan, and unlike what has been the rule in Africa or the Balkans.

The development of an EU global role should affect the very notion of actor in international affairs

An argument can and has been made that regionalism modeled on the EU will be the only really effective form of international actorness in the future. State actorness is a thing of the past, at least for most States. At the very least, and more in accord with the tone of various previous case studies, regionalism may not be 'an alternative' but it does seem more a more 'a significant complementary layer of governance' in global affairs. This 'often ad hoc division of labor' may be 'sometimes consensual, sometimes contested', but it does seem difficult to argue that growing multipolarity will not in some cases — namely of

Europe — lead to a growing need of critical mass to deal with Great Continental Powers that only a regional framework can provide. (Farrett 2004, p.431).

At the same time there are undeniable problems in coordinating different foreign policy agendas in an EU with 27 member states

However, the difficulty in finding commonalities of values and of interests within the EU should not be exaggerated. Topical issues that spring immediately to mind are the question of securing energy supplies and defense of basic human rights namely in the context of humanitarian crises that may generate a number of other problems. As recent opinion polls showed, there is a strong shared preference at the level of public opinion across the EU, not least regarding the need for a stronger Europe abroad. Yet at the level of the national governing elites, who will have to agree on what this might mean, enthusiasm for EU international actorness seems relatively low in some countries. This may or may not change, but there is a serious problem of coordination of elite agendas that have a narrow conception of the national interest and are still very conditioned by different diplomatic traditions. This is reinforced by the way the national press and the political opposition tend to frame European policies in terms of winning or losing according to a narrow understanding of the national interest.

This difficulty in coordinating agendas in order to promote an effective EU international role is particularly evident in the case of those more testing aspects of foreign policy — responses to complex emergencies, particularly violent crises or protracted and extremely complex conflicts or disputes analyzed at greater length in the previous case studies. These often require rapid and flexible decision-making in order to be effective

However, the existence of privileged relationships between a certain number of EU members — usually those most engaged in a given region — and key States outside of Europe may create

serious difficulties in achieving a common European policy. This is, of course, particularly true regarding a number of EU countries and the US. But it is also true, albeit to a lesser degree, when it comes to Portugal or France and Morocco, or Greece and Serbia, or a number of European countries and Russia.

This seems to point to a continuously complex, negotiated, difficult road for European international actorness in the future. A road constrained by national interests but not necessarily in clash with it. A EU-wide prevailing policy preference or interest and a given national policy preference or interest can either converge, diverge or be relatively neutral. The EU could not and does not have to replace the more specific foreign policy interests of different States or groups of States, but it can supplement and complement them, more or less smoothly.

France, for instance, may not want to sacrifice its relationship with Morocco for the sake of some common European position regarding the Western Sahara. But it actively sought EU engagement in accordance with its vision for the region in the Congo or now in Chad, in order to provide added resources and legitimacy.

The EU was never a political midget, except for those with an excessively limited conception of what politics is. There has been a strong effort, of which the Reform Treaty will be a further step, to institutionalize the EU's international actorness, giving it more means and also the mechanisms that will allow it to crystallize more easily a single political will in the shape of specific aims.

But this recent abundance of action plans, of regional strategies and the issuing of a EU security strategy, only helps to illustrate one final and crucial point.

States, even as powerful as the US, are not necessarily very effective, coherent or provident international actors

The fact that the EU is so often compared with the US, the most powerful State today is indicative of the height of expect-

tations that have surrounded the EU. They are probably bound to be disappointed in the near future; with or without a European Army; with or without a European diplomatic service; and with or without a new institutional framework. The Reform Treaty will be more significant in terms of EU international actorness if it fails to be ratified than if it succeeds in coming into force — because renewed failure at institutional reform will only raise fresh doubts about how solid the EU really is as an international actor.

The EU is obviously not a State. But that makes it part and parcel of a growing trend for global politics to move away from being the exclusive preserve of nation-states. It is the very basis of the Westphalian order that is being questioned, and there are those who refer to these confusing times in terms of a neo-medievalism (e.g. Zielonka 2006). An interesting and provocative notion, but one that ignores the fact that despite the enormous simplification in global politics that took place before and after 1648, still after that turning point there were always very important international non-State actors, from multinational companies to universal religious confessions to African tribes.

The EU in the world may very well be more a revealer of today's global problems than a decisive actor in solving them. This, however, does not make it defective or unique, but rather a normal international actor and in fact more State-like than perhaps many believe.

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