



The European Union: A Global Actor for a Comprehensive Approach of Security

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General,
Dear members of the Delegation,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Colleagues,

It is a pleasure for me to be here and I am grateful for the opportunity to speak with you about the contribution of the EU to international security. The topic I have been tasked to discuss can be summarized by the following questions:

“Has the EU become a global actor of international security? What is the EU approach of security?”

INTRODUCTION

As the famous American novelist James Arthur Baldwin used to say, “*By knowing where we come from, there is no limit to where we can go*”. It may appear that the story of ESDP is a very short one. Indeed, when compared with the whole European political cooperation process, ESDP remains a relatively nascent exercise. Strictly defined, and if one considers the Franco-British summit of St-Malo as the founding momentum of a new dynamic in Europe, it appears that ESDP is only ten years old. Operationally, and if one accepts to see the ARTEMIS mission as the first concrete operation undertaken under the umbrella of the EU without support of NATO (under the Berlin+ Agreement), ESDP is no more than five years old.

This is mainly due to the specific identity of the European Union. The EU is a complex entity which includes the European institutions (e.g. the European Commission, the European Parliament, the

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Council of Ministers, etc.) and the 27 member states whose various interests make the European construction a dynamic process of consensus searching and bargaining.

Possessing a 25% share of the world gross national product and a 20% share of international trade, it would have been a non-sense to see the European Union opt out of the international scene. Europe's position on the international scene is a safeguard for its value and mandatory for the defence of its interests.

Today, growing demands are directed explicitly towards the EU for more security commitment. Moreover, these demands do not only concern the military. They express the need for a growing civil-military approach of conflict prevention. Today, one can argue that the EU has developed a specific and genuine identity; that of a comprehensive security provider. In other words, the EU has become a true pluralistic security community built around a progressive integration process.

Debates about the external action of the European Union traditionally emphasize the role played by EU member states in the narrowly-defined context of the European Security and Defence Policy. This is, however, a partial and incomplete view of the wide array of instruments the EU has at its disposal. Besides the tools and capabilities developed in the ESDP context, other instruments belonging to the first pillar of the EU have to be mentioned given their role in conflict prevention. In this regard, the part played by the European Commission (EC) and its General Directorates are of primary concern.

Based on the experience accumulated by the European Union during its various missions and engagements, the present paper aims at explaining how the EU has become a global security provider. As we will demonstrate, globalization of EU's external action has, at least, three different meanings:

1. A first meaning is the globalization of the operational area and the expansion of the operational spectrum;
2. A second meaning is the growing interlacing of the civil and military assets in the context of operations;
3. A third and last meaning can be found in the progressive inter-locking between the first and the second EU pillars (i.e. between the EC and the European Council).

EU GOES "GLOBAL"

Although the Balkans used to be one of the most important operational areas for ESDP, several new theaters of operations have been added to the EU mission list in the last 5 years. EU's external action is today constituted by a growing number of operational activities.

In Africa, the European Union has deployed not less than 5 missions. EU NAVCO shows the clear resolution of the EU member states to combat piracy and protect maritime trade. Established within the General Secretariat of the Council, the EU NAVCO consists of naval experts from several EU member states. On the terrain, Operation ATLANTA aims to increase maritime security of the Somali coasts. EU's naval forces contribute to the protection of the World Food Program vessels in the Somali waters. EUFOR Tchad/RCA is – with the now achieved operation ARTEMIS (Ituri) – maybe one of the most symbolic operations conducted under the auspices of the European Union. EUFOR Tchad/RCA is deployed in a remote theatre which is difficult to access. One of the main characteristics of this operation is that it consists in the monitoring of a very extensive area. It must be added that EUFOR Tchad/RCA forms part of a multidimensional support which the European Union as a whole is providing to the region. This aspect of the mission will be developed later. The European Union is also active in DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) via two main missions. First EUSEC RD Congo clearly illustrates EU's commitment to support the Security Sector Reform (SSR) process in the country. Second, EUPOL

RC Congo, for its part, is directed towards the reform of the Congolese National Police. Last but not least, in Guinea-Bissau, the EUSSR aims at assisting the local authorities in the SSR process.

Regarding the Balkans, the EU is still involved in Bosnia-Herzegovina via the Operation ALTHEA and a EU Police Mission (EUPM). As far as Operation ALTHEA is concerned, a progressive transfer of Joint Military Affairs Tasks to relevant national authorities is on track. Regarding EUPM, promotion and support of the BiH police services are still under way. In Kosovo the EULEX mission pursues its deployment. The purpose of EULEX Kosovo is to uphold and promote the rule of Law under the UN Security Council Resolution 1244. Other missions are also deployed in the Near Middle East, South Caucasus and Central Asia.

The expansion of the operational area is not the sole notable trend we have to underline. Besides the growing number of EU engagements worldwide, one has to insist on the remarkable extension of the tasks assumed by the European Union. Indeed, an increasingly broad range of security related tasks have been undertaken under the responsibility of the EU. Mandates are becoming far more diverse, especially in the civilian sector (border control missions, security services reform, police, rule of law, etc).

Some doubts remain about the real ability of the EU to act autonomously in high intensity operations. EU and member states have traditionally given their consent to operations with a manageable troop size. Large scale engagements seem not to find the support of EU leaders given the inherent risk to see EU forces become a part of the conflict instead of contribute to the resolution. That seems to be a wise approach.

INTERLACING OF CIVIL AND MILITARY ASSETS

Operations conducted under the EU flag cannot be hermetically labeled as civilian or military missions. Rather, EU engagements tend to fall under the range of civil-military operations. Here again, one can argue that we assist to a globalization of the “instruments” and “actors” deployed by the EU.

It must be added that, to a large extent, such a trend has some practical grounds, essentially linked to the specificity of financial arrangements within the European Union. For the time being, civilian missions are directly financed through the collective CFSP-budget, while military missions abide to the principle “costs lie where they fall”². In other words, civilian missions are supported collectively through the budget of the Union while military costs must be assumed by states. Civil-military missions allow the EU member states to do more at a lower direct cost.

EU THINKS “GLOBAL”: THE GROWING INTERLOCKING BETWEEN THE FIRST AND THE SECOND EU-PILLARS

The European Union, as a global actor, has defined certain political objectives such as promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the partner countries. These objectives have been translated into specific “human rights clauses” in treaties with third countries since the 1990s. The partnership with Africa is based on one of the most elaborated frameworks for political and economic cooperation, where the promotion of European political objectives is a fundamental feature. The European Union (EU) and its Member States have a long history of cooperation in East Africa, both at a national and at a regional level. Uganda is a member of the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, whose relations with Europe date back to the first “Lomé Conventions” in 1975. Ever since, the EU has used various development cooperation instruments, such as the European

² Only a small proportion of the total military cost (that is, common expenditures) is funded via the ATHENA mechanism.

Development Fund (EDF), several budget lines and humanitarian aid in Uganda. In addition, the strengthening of the EU's political relations with ACP countries, together with the emergence of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), has been reflected in the evolving approach of the EU in the region. The Commission Communication on Conflict Prevention, presented in April 2001, has recognized the Union's focus on conflict prevention and peace building.

One of the most noticeable trends one can deduce from the most recent EU's engagements is related with the increasing frequent combination of assets belonging to the first (European Community) and the second (CFSP) EU-Pillars. Such an evolution is traditionally welcomed by scholars and observers who in the past repeatedly denounced the risk to assist to a near-paralysis of the tools conceived by the EU.

A first example of this interlocking between the European Commission and the European Council can be found in the EU Police Advisory Team (EUPAT) mission established in the FYROM that succeeded to the civilian mission police PROXIMA. EUPAT is aimed at preparing the hand-over to the European Commission of the remaining tasks. A second illustration of this trend can be found in the complementary efforts between the European force (EUFOR) and the cooperation and development measures taken by the European Commission within EUFOR Tchad/RCA.

The role of the European Commission in crisis management has to be underlined if one wants to have a global picture of the EU instruments. A number of initiatives emanating from the EC must be stressed in this regard:

1. The Communication of 11 April 2001 on conflict prevention (COM(2001)211 Final);
2. Provisions in the context of the Cooperation with ACP countries involved in armed conflicts (communication of the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament [COM(1999)240 Final]);
3. The Communication to the Council, the EU parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM(2005)153 Final).

Moreover, it has to be noticed that the EU Commission is trying to implement a global and comprehensive approach in the field of conflict prevention. Directorates-General concerned with that specific issue develop policies based on an intersection between natural resources management, energy, demography and conflict. A recent study on addressing the inter-linkages between natural resources management and conflict in the European Commission's external relations shows the importance the Commission gives to this subject and outlines its commitment in doing better and more in the future.

The Commission is also working to improve the way international relations and diplomacy tools are used to advance environmental objectives and to deal with rising tensions over natural resources. New environmental diplomacy actions have been put into practice under the Instrument for Stability.

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Considering the various theatres of operations where EU missions are deployed, it must be recognized that ESDP – in cooperation with some elements of the European Commission – has gained credibility and political weight as a global security actor. Yet, some difficulties remain and important problems should be dealt with if the European Union as a whole wants to reach its strategic objectives.

First, one has to mention the limited political and geographical scopes of EU interventions. Whether EU forces would be able to operate under severe and conflicting conditions remains uncertain. Success stories of limited EU missions could generate a paradox. As ESDP gains in credibility by deploying

missions with restricted caveats, the EU could well create new expectations leading the member states to accept new engagements with higher risks. In other words, to maintain itself as a credible global security actor in the future, the EU may encounter some difficulties to “choose its crisis”.

Second, better ways of civil-military integration efforts must be found in order to guarantee a higher degree of coherence of action among the several actors involved during a mission. Solutions have to be found in order to enhance the ability of the EU to deploy well-trained personnel in an interagency context. Smarter procedures and protocols have to be defined to allow the EU to engage the right and the “best-tailored” assets at very short notice. Moreover, a global reflection on crisis management should be undertaken if the EU wants to be able to intervene in each of the various sequences of the entire crisis management cycle. Yet, rapid reaction forces (RRF) are of primary importance. Nonetheless, they must be integrated within a global strategy alongside long-term engagements, inter-organizational agreements (with NATO, OSCE, CEI, AU) and exit strategies.

On an institutional level, a true inter-pillars approach has to be developed if the EU wants to achieve its security objectives in a better coordinated way. The Lisbon Treaty has put an end to the pillar construction, a legacy of the Maastricht Treaty. The negative outcome of the Irish referendum jeopardizes the ratification process of the new Treaty and the implementation of the provisions which are expected to reinforce the coherence of action of the EU. Among these provisions, the creation of a European External Action Service (composed of representatives of the EU Council, the EC and the diplomatic delegations of the member states) is of first importance.

Finally, regarding the capability-based process, the European Defence Agency, the services of the European Commission – especially those in charge with the “Space & Security” aspects of the 7th Framework Program for R&D) and the European Space Agency should join forces in order to develop critical technologies and to ensure that Europe can rely on scientific, technical and industrial capacity for deploying missions with the “most-well fitted” assets.