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Note from the Editors

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This issue of *CFSP Forum* opens with an analysis of the recently completed French Presidency of the EU. The French Presidency sought a full foreign policy agenda for its Presidency and then faced a set of foreign policy challenges during its period in office.

The second piece in this issue focuses on the role of the EU in military conflict management in Africa and which is now a well-established aspect of the ESDP. In the third article in the issue Chris Bickerton opens a discussion on how one might best assess the functionality of EU foreign policy - and we look forward to other contributions on this theme.

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What Difference did a (French) Presidency Make? FPEU08 and EU Foreign Policy

Helen Drake, Loughborough University

The 2008 French Presidency of the Council of the European Union (FPEU08) initially augured well for the EU's foreign policy ambitions. First, the Lisbon Treaty was waiting in the wings to strengthen the provisions for EU foreign policy leadership and capacity. By having a semi-permanent president of the European Council, the EU would finally have given itself the option of a conduit for a single voice in international affairs. This leader was to be ably supported by the EU's first very own 'foreign minister' – a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. S/he would straddle the Commission and Council, bridge the pillars and lean on a new collective diplomatic structure, the European External Action Service: a precarious balancing act if ever there was one.[1] Permanent structured cooperation protocols were to have facilitated collective military action by the willing, and more generally, maintain the momentum of the EU's ESDP, itself to be re-named as the CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy) – a largely symbolic upgrade). All of these advances seemed to evaporate when the Irish

[1] ISIS Europe, 'The Impact of the Lisbon Treaty on CFSP and ESDP', *European Security Review*, no. 37, February 2007, available at http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/2008_artrel_150_esr37tol-mar08.pdf

electorate voted against ratification of the Treaty on 12 June 2008.

Second, the EU Presidency had now fallen to a large member state, and specifically France, whose long-term goal of an *Europe-puissance* implies that the *finalité* or end game of the EU is to become 'an autonomous nuclear armed power bloc'.[2] It would therefore be reasonable to expect the incoming EU chair to be highly motivated in matters of EU foreign policy. Moreover, at the time of taking up the presidency, France was in the throes of a significant review of its own national defence, security and foreign policy priorities and structures.[3] This followed the election of Nicolas Sarkozy as French President in May 2007 and occurred in a context of an ongoing public spending review in France. Expectations were thus higher than would otherwise have been the case that France would become an easier EU player in matters of external affairs. In particular, Paris had declared its intention to rejoin NATO's integrated bodies in 2009, a move that at a stroke was likely to improve relations between France and many EU member states, not least of which Germany. French commitment to ESDP was in no doubt – indeed, progress here was a condition of the NATO move. Moreover, the Franco-British joint summit declaration of March 2008[4] following the 'fraternal' summit meeting of that month in London, provided a solid basis – and a shopping list – for cooperation within the EU, on foreign policy matters, between the two member states whose differences are potentially most damaging to the EU's foreign policy ambitions.

On the other hand, what difference can a six-month long Presidency make? Its role is to act neutrally and broker agreements, if necessary, on the basis of the lowest common denominator. It can influence agendas only by pacing and structuring them, far less by setting them, since so much of a Presidency's job is 'inherited business.'[5] The last time the French had been in the chair, moreover, between July-December 2000, the outcome was the Nice Treaty and a reputation as an 'arrogant' and 'autistic' negotiator[6] to live down. Furthermore, the extent to which the French foreign policy review would actually make for a more amenable member state was an as yet untested quantity. In matters regarding NATO, for example, the evidence for continuity was more compelling than anything else; the French defence budget, for one, was tabled to be smaller, not larger, and its NATO overtures did not conceal the fact that France can still hardly be seen as an 'Atlanticist' state. Relations with Germany were testy. And could the EU expect neutrality from a chair with such a vested interest in the security and defence agenda item?

Mediterranean Union

At the start of FPEU08, therefore, all bets were off, but the omens were good, despite the Irish No vote. An interlude which had occurred even before the Presidency began suggested that the French would listen and learn where it was pragmatic to do so, which augured well for the Presidency's brokerage function. President Sarkozy had grandly announced on the very *soir* of his election victory on 6 May 2007 that his EU Presidency would launch a 'Mediterranean Union' (MU), which he proceeded to do in March 2008.[7] In the face of a Barcelona process (the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership) perceived to be

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[2] David Yost, 'France's new nuclear doctrine', *International Affairs,* vol. 82(4), 2006, p. 719.

[3] See *The French White Paper on Defence and Security*. Accessible (with overview) at http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/New-French-White-Paper-on-defence.html; *Livre blanc sur la politique étrangère et européenne de la France 2008-2020*. See http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/ministere_817/modernisation_12824/livre-blanc-sur-politique-etrangere-europeenne-france_18407/remise-du-livre-blanc-m.-bernard-kouchner-11.07.08_64433.html; also http://www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr/en/information/latest_news_97/the_white_paper_on_61264.html for an overview in English.

[4] Joint UK-France Summit Declaration, 27 March 2008, available at http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page15144.

[5] Jonas Tallberg, 'The Power of the Presidency', *Journal of Common Market Studies,* vol. 42, no. 5, 2004, pp. 999-1022.

[6] O. Costa & J.-P. Dalloz, 'How French Policy-Makers See Themselves' in Helen Drake (ed.), *French Relations with the European Union* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 36-74.

[7] In his victory speech, Nicolas Sarkozy said: 'I would like to reach out to all of the Mediterranean peoples to tell them that it is in the Mediterranean that so much is at stake, that we must surmount all of hatred [sic] and make place for the larger and more important dream of peace and civilization. I want to tell them that the time has come to build together a Mediterranean Union that will be a treaty of unity between Europe and Africa.' Accessible at http://www.support-sarkozy-france.com/nicolas_sarkozy/victory_speech.php

ailing, at least in comparison with the EU's relations with its neighbourhood to the east, and with Turkish membership still a live issue, the MU was initially conceived of as a Schuman Plan Mark II: a new community with its own membership, institutions, and 'projects' designed to generate new loyalties and processes on the EU's Mediterranean borders – spillover at work. Objections rained down on the plan, notably from Germany, but also from within Sarkozy's own diplomatic team, and within weeks it had been watered down into Barcelona-Plus, and symbolically renamed the Union for the Mediterranean. Its first summit was held in Paris on 13th July 2008, two weeks into FPEU08, jointly chaired by France and Egypt. In the bland language of the Presidency programme, '[w]hile retaining the significant political achievements of the Barcelona process in terms of stability and democracy, the Union for the Mediterranean should give a new framework and new impetus to the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue, based on genuine partnership through new governance and specific projects with a regional dimension, particularly in the fields of decontaminating the Mediterranean, energy, civil protection and transport.'[8] By the end of 2008, Barcelona had been chosen as the Union's HQ, and business between the EU and its non-EU Mediterranean neighbours was to all intents and purposes back to normal.

Security and defence as a Presidency priority

In terms of FPEU08 objectives proper, the French Presidency tabled security and defence as a core priority of its Presidency, couched in terms of '[g]iving renewed impetus to a Europe of Defence and Security.'[9] Under this heading, some agenda items were emphasised more than others, with a 'key goal' being the 'strengthening [of] military and crisis management capabilities, [and] developing the EU's instruments.' This was a matter, for the Presidency, of 'creating the political conditions necessary for a renewed impetus in developing military capabilities in Europe'.[10] The gist of the proposals were to use the Lisbon Treaty's provisions for enhanced cooperation to allow member states to build operational capacity via specific projects; and to take a holistic approach to improving cooperation between member states by focusing, for example, on matters of training, procurement and research.

At the informal summit of the EU's defence ministers on 1-2 October 2008 in Deauville, preliminary agreement was reached on a number of these initiatives,[11] and the Conclusions of the European Council summit meeting on 11-12 December included a more detailed declaration of the European Council's 'intent, through concrete decisions, to give new impetus to the European Security and Defence Policy in order to meet the new security challenges.'[12] In a declaration within a declaration, the heads of state and government underlined their support for the ongoing process, steered by the EU's Military Committee, European Defence Agency (EDA), and the Council, of identifying and addressing critical shortfalls (and incompatibilities) in the member states' collective military resource and capabilities. This latest 'declaration of capabilities' was issued by the Council on 11 December 2008 and 'set numerical and precise targets to enable the EU, in the coming years, to conduct simultaneously, outside its territory, a series of civilian missions and military operations of varying scope, corresponding to the most likely scenarios.'[13]

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[8] French Presidency of the Council of the European Union, *Work Programme, 1 July – 31 December 2008. Europe Taking Action to Meet Today's Challenges*, 2008, available at http://www.ue2008.fr/webdav/site/PFUE/shared/ProgrammePFUE/Programme_EN.pdf, pp 25-6.

[9] Ibid., p. 23.

[10] Ibid., p. 23.

[11] See Christian Lequesne and Olivier Rozenburg, 'The French Presidency of 2008: the Unexpected Agenda', 2008:3op (Swedish Institute for European Policy Studies (SIEPS), 2008), available at www.sieps.se.

[12] Council of the European Union, *Presidency Conclusions. Brussels European Council, 11 and 12 December 2008*, available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/104692.pdf.

[13] See the Council at http://consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/showPage.asp?id=1349&lang=EN for background on the EU's ongoing process of identifying and addressing the EU's 'shortfall' in military resources in relation to its planning assumptions and scenarios; and http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/esdp/104676.pdf for the Council's 'Declaration on strengthening capabilities' issued on 11/12/08.

These are developments that require the member states to commit voluntarily to the further 'specialisation, pooling and sharing of major equipment projects'[14] (including air transport and intelligence). It nevertheless remains the case that no member state, including France, can currently countenance significant budget increases in the area of defence, a fact that will doubtless keep a lid on the EDSP for the foreseeable future. However, this is not to undermine the importance of the incremental gains in capacity made in this policy area under FPEU08, or its initiatives (such as a naval, anti-piracy mission – 'Atalanta' – launched in early December off the coast of Somalia, under UK command). Progress was also made on uncontroversial issues such as an Erasmus-style initiative to exchange military officers, while contentious matters such as the 'autonomy' (from NATO) of EU military decision-making – the ghost of St. Malo – or the notion of an ESDP HQ are expressed in the Presidency conclusions in the diplomatic and tame language of the 'spirit' of cooperation and mutual respect.

Alongside ESDP were a raft of other items that underlined the Presidency's determination to further an ongoing EU agenda that faced outwards towards the Union's global challenges and commitments. These included the pursuit of the EU's enlargement and neighbourhood policies; pursuing the EU's sustainable development agenda; 'promoting human rights and the rule of law'; 'promoting trade rules based on openness and reciprocity'; and 'establishing new partnerships with the various players on the international stage.' In the pursuit of these objectives, a significant number of international summits were convened under FPEU08 (between the EU and South Africa, Ukraine, India, Canada, Russia and Brazil, and the Asia-Europe (ASEM) meeting held in Beijing in late October; shortly thereafter, China requested the postponement of the EU-China summit planned for early December, in retaliation at the Presidency's overtures to the Dalai Lama). Further unscripted summits were to follow as a result of the unforeseen and dramatic circumstances that erupted within weeks of the start of the Presidency.

War in Georgia and the financial crisis intervene

Barely one month into FPEU08, on 7 August, President Mikheil Saakashvili of Georgia ordered the invasion of South Ossetia, triggering an all-out and protracted conflict between the former Soviet state and Moscow which intervened to support South Ossetia. The French Presidency was influential in steering the EU27 unanimously through the ups and downs of the aftermath of this dangerous crisis and finally into calmer waters by early October. In mid-August, Sarkozy directly championed the Presidency's ceasefire proposals in Moscow with the Russian Prime Minister and President. The essence of the proposals was the call for the 'immediate cessation of hostilities', 'full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia', and the 're-establishment of the situation that existed' before the conflict.[15] Criticism of this activity was directed more towards a Presidency position seen as overly soft towards Russia when it breached the proposals – this attitude itself stemming from France's long history of non-alignment (rhetorically at least) and the advantages it is deemed to bring France in terms of diplomatic support around the world[16] – than against Sarkozy's diplomatic skills *per se*. At the extraordinary European Council convened on 1 September 2008, moreover, the EU's member states pronounced themselves unanimous in their concern for the ramifications of the Georgian conflict, and in their condemnation for Russia's unilateral recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

In hindsight, this was a golden opportunity for the French and EU president Nicolas Sarkozy to give free rein to his leadership style widely dubbed as hyperactive; it was certainly energetic, undeniably charismatic, and on this occasion as successful as any EU president was likely to have been. Similarly, when faced with the severe crisis of the world's financial markets in early October 2008, President Sarkozy and his diplomatic team led the EU27 into shows of unity despite the scrambling by national capitals for national solutions to failing banks and

[14] Council of the European Union, *Presidency Conclusions*, p. 16, Annex 2, point 4.

[15] See *Financial Times*, 12 August 2008, p. 6.

[16] See Lequesne and Rozenburg, 'The French Presidency of 2008', pp. 23-4.

plummeting markets. A six-week period beginning in early October saw intense activity at numerous EU levels – European Council, Eurozone, Presidency – as well as transatlantically, during all of which the cooperation between Presidency and Commission was particularly remarkable, given France's history of routine disdain for the EU's supranational body. Franco-British cooperation was also to the fore, despite differing views on market regulations, in favour of a new 'Bretton Woods' settlement for global financial trade. These efforts peaked on 15 November 2008 in an international summit of the G20 held in Washington DC on financial markets and the world economy, and culminated, at the Presidency's concluding summit on 11-12 December, in the approval of the Commission's 'European Economic Recovery Plan' costing approximately 1.5% of the EU27's GDP and laying out a 'common framework' for the member states' ongoing responses to international financial instability and its ramifications for national economies and labour markets.

These were developments and compromises for which Sarkozy's brinksmanship and energy have to take some credit, however high-risk his innately spontaneous and irreverent approach to world affairs (and leaders) may be. His approach, by nature disruptive of the certainty and predictability that diplomatic protocol and etiquette are designed to achieve, proved to be useful tools in international crisis management, in addition to a French Presidency team which included – as we would expect – highly experienced and in some cases wise advisors. In contrast to the testy cohabitation between French President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin in FPEU2000, the solidity of the French team was significant in unifying the EU member states in very testing and difficult times; or, more precisely, in forcefully circumnavigating the EU's internal differences.

The Presidency endgame

Despite the international turbulence – and even the closing week of the year and of the Presidency brought another shock in the form of renewed Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Gaza, requiring foreign ministers to shuttle back to Paris once more to make the EU's voice heard – FPEU08 held its course, and that in itself reflects well on the French efforts. Nevertheless, the EU was only marginally closer to constituting a *Europe-puissance* in December 2008 than it was in July of that year. This was no fault of the Presidency itself; rather a reflection of the incrementalism that characterises this EU policy field, and the constraints, normative as well as institutional, not to mention pragmatic, that hold an EU Presidency back from pushing national interests to the fore. These constraints can be expected to harden should a semi-permanent president of the European Council ever see the light of day, which itself of course hinges on the outcome of a second Irish vote, due to be held in June 2009 following the French Presidency's brokering of a number of compromises in December 2008 (such as an agreement that all member states would, after all, retain a Commissioner each; or the guarantee that the Treaty of Lisbon will not prejudice the security and defence policy of the member states, a reference to Ireland's neutrality in international affairs). The events that rocked the EU during FPEU08 could also be taken as arguments *in favour of* the Lisbon Treaty provisions for more continuity in its foreign policy-making, on the grounds that it was merely fortuitous that the Presidency fell to France at this time, and that a country with fewer resources and clout, or a more strident partner, could have struggled to make the EU's voice heard and/or to maintain unity amongst the EU27.

FPEU08 was, by design and in retrospect, a Presidency with the EU's external identity and capacity at its core, a fact underlined by the crises that erupted in its course when the rules of the international system and regimes were at stake, and when the Presidency clearly prioritised the EU's ability to make its voice heard. Even the Presidency's other core objectives – climate change, energy security, CAP review and immigration – reflected the risks and concerns posed to the EU by its openness to international forces and flows of all kinds. Indeed, the motto agreed for the Presidency before it began was 'a Europe that protects' (*une Europe qui protège*). At the time, this seemed to be a protectionist French reflex of little added value. In hindsight it seems closer to the mark, given the serious threats to international stability that marked the six-month Presidency period. On the important issues of climate change and energy security, FPEU08 ended

on an agreement that in the words of the Presidency conclusions 'will enable the EU to honour the ambitious commitments entered into in this area in 2007 to maintain its leading role in the search for an ambitious and comprehensive global agreement.'[17] More prosaically, a deal was struck that all member states could apparently live with, which will require, by 2020, significant (20%) cuts in carbon dioxide emissions, and similarly sized increases in the proportion of renewable energy use, and which showcased a 'mixture of firmness and judicious concessions' on the part of the Presidency, although not all environmentalists were so impressed with the results.[18] In matters of immigration and asylum, Euro-African negotiations at ministerial level had by mid-October 2008 already eased the EU towards agreement on a ''European Pact on Immigration and Asylum' at the European Council summit meeting of 15 October 2008. This was a 'solemn' statement of political commitment to pursue the EU's ongoing agenda in this regard, rather than a detailed legislative programme.[19] As with the ESDP, the achievement was limited to providing a 'new impetus' to policy in this domain, and demonstrates the limitations of the Presidency function in matters pertaining to national sovereignty, particularly where national situations and needs vary so widely and a balancing act is the best a Presidency can hope for.

The Presidency evaluated

All told, FPEU08 came at a good time for Sarkozy domestically – support for his leadership has risen at home, admittedly from unprecedentedly low levels – and has apparently done no harm to the EU's international standing, and may even have advanced it. The Presidency achieved all of its core objectives, and therefore kept the EU in business on the many fronts where it is currently active, no mean achievement given the unstable environment in which FPEU08 occurred.[20] 2009 brings rather different challenges to the EU's stability and to its capacity both to regulate itself and to influence world affairs. Elections to the European Parliament in June 2009 will be followed by the appointment of a new Commission to take up office in 2010. The Presidency will fall to the Czech Republic and then to Sweden. Neither member state is a member of the Eurozone; both member states are vigorously Eurosceptic in the literal sense of the term – and the Czech Republic has still not yet ratified the Lisbon Treaty. Neither are accustomed to exercising global leadership in the contemporary era. Ireland may or may not ratify the Treaty of Lisbon which may or may not, therefore, bring into force its provisions for a more streamlined – on paper at least – foreign policy apparatus at EU level. Despite the achievements of FPEU08, the capacity of the EU to act unanimously and decisively in the global environment is thus far from assured, and as has been seen between July and December 2008, depends to a significant degree on the intangibles and unpredictability of the personal leadership factor.◊

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[17] Council of the European Union, *Presidency Conclusions*, p. 1

[18] See *Financial Times*, 15 December 2008, p. 8.

[19] See http://www.euractiv.com/docad/pacteEN.doc for the text of the pact as adopted by the European Council in late September 2008.

[20] See Jean-Dominique Giuliani, 'A Successful Presidency. Results of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union', (Robert Schuman Foundation, 2008), available at http://www.robert-schuman.eu/doc/questions_europe/qe-121-en_2.pdf for a very positive assessment of FPEU08.

The European Union and Military Conflict Management in Africa

Gorm Rye Olsen, Roskilde University, Denmark.

In late October and early November 2008, the civil war in the Congolese province North Kivu intensified. Alarming reports were heard of massive atrocities against the civilian population, and some indicated that a genocide could be under way. The highly vulnerable situation led to an international debate demanding international military intervention to stop the atrocities. The chairman of the EU's Military Committee, General Henri Bentegeat stated that, in principle, the EU could deploy a battlegroup to Goma, the main town in North Kivu. A deployment, however, required the consent of the member states in the Council of General Affairs and External Relations.

On November 10 2008, the Council debated the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It was decided that the deployment of an EU battlegroup in the province was not the answer. However, the Council promised to increase the amount of humanitarian assistance to the refugees and to internally displaced persons. This was disappointing for France and Belgium: both countries advocated the deployment of an EU force. However, a number of member states, including Germany and Britain, were against the deployment. The British position at the meeting on November 10 was interesting, since Foreign Minister David Miliband was in favour of deploying an EU military force the previous week.

The debate over a possible EU force deployed in North Kivu illustrates the ongoing debate among the member states concerning the officially declared high priority of conflict prevention and conflict management in Africa. The policy has developed from mainly non-committal policy declarations in the 1990s into concrete instruments which are being applied in the real world. In recent years, conflict management with military means has become increasingly important in the Union's policy towards Africa. The policy has crystallized into two core instruments: on the one hand, EU military operations within the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)/Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and, on the other hand, the African Peace Facility (APF), funding 'African solutions to African problems.' The essay describes the actual implementation of these two policy instruments. The description is used as the basis for a discussion of how to understand the rather significant development from the 1990s to the current state of affairs.

Congo 2003: Operation Artemis

In June 2003, within the framework of the ESDP, the EU Council of Ministers adopted a resolution which, for the first time, deployed EU military forces outside Europe and without using NATO facilities under the Berlin Plus Agreement.[21] The aim of Operation Artemis was to stabilize the security situation in the crisis-ridden Ituri province in the DRC and to improve the humanitarian situation in and around the main town of Bunia.[22] Many observers warned that a new outbreak of violence could threaten the national process aimed at reaching a negotiated settlement.[23] In that situation, the United Nations (UN) General Secretary Kofi Annan asked for the establishment of a coalition of the willing to bring an end to the humanitarian crisis in Ituri. The EU fairly swiftly offered to deploy a force in Ituri. The EU force was from the start meant to be an interim solution until it was possible to deploy an effective UN force

[21] Catherine Gegout, 'Causes and Consequences of the EU's Military Intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A Realist Explanation', *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Vol. 10, 2005, pp. 427–43; Ståle Ulriksen, Catriona Gourlay & Catriona Mace, 'Operation Artemis the Shape of Things to Come?', *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 2004, pp. 501–25

[22] Fernanda Faria, *Crisis management in sub-Saharan Africa. The Role of the European Union*, Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2004, pp. 20-40; Ulriksen et al., 'Operation Artemis'.

[23] Ulriksen et al., 'Operation Artemis', pp. 509–11; Faria, *Crisis management*.

in the province. Evaluated against the declared objective, the mission was fairly successful.

There are several interpretations as to why the operation in the DRC was launched. One is the timing, which was closely linked to the deep division among the European member states caused by the war in Iraq in the spring of 2003. The Congo operation was an attempt by the European powers to prove that they could still cooperate and that the CFSP/ESDP was still alive. Also, it appears that the French government found it pertinent for the EU to prove that it could act autonomously from NATO. The UK 'go ahead' to the operation was mainly to prove that London was still interested in developing a European defence dimension.[24]

Congo 2006

During the election campaign in the DRC in the spring of 2006, maintenance of order in Kinshasa was recognized by the UN as a key element for the success of the planned elections. Therefore, the EU's Foreign Affairs Council decided temporarily to support the UN mission already in the country to stabilize the situation during the election process, protect civilians and protect the airport in Kinshasa. The military deployment with the operational headquarters provided by Germany included an advance element of almost 1,000 soldiers in and around Kinshasa. The EU also had available almost 1,200 troops on call 'over the horizon' in neighbouring Gabon, from where they were quickly deployable if necessary.[25]

The motives of EU decision-makers for launching the EUFOR DRC mission seem to have been mixed. Jolyon Howorth mentions 'accusations that it was primarily intended to get some good coverage for the EU', though 'consciously framed as part of the EU's comprehensive approach to the DRC' which, taking the different missions together, 'do amount to a sizeable measure of assistance'.[26] In the words of a discussion paper, the Congo crisis was 'a political testing ground for the EU to design forms of intervention.'[27] Also, there is a strong argument pointing out that the launch of the mission in the DRC had to 'do with French-German cohesion and with the EU's desire to bolster the credibility of the ESDP after the fiasco over the European constitutional treaty's rejection in the referendums in France and the Netherlands.'[28]

Despite conflicts of interests and the complexity of decision-making in Brussels, it appears that there was a solid consensus on the need for EU contributions to conflict prevention/conflict management in the DRC. The consensus covered the member states and the Commission, Development Ministers and Foreign Ministers and also DG Development and DG External Relations.[29] There is no doubt that several states played a crucial role in 2006 in involving the EU in the DRC. For years, France and Belgium have been actively engaged in the DRC and in the wider region. However, an operation under the French flag would have been more or less impossible in view of the French engagement in the region in the early 1990s, and not least because of the role of France during the genocide in Rwanda.[30] Therefore, an intervention and a mission under the EU flag and EU command was the only possible solution.

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[24] Gegout, 'Causes and Consequences', pp. 438-437, Ulriksen et al, 'Operation Artemis', p. 512, Confidential interviews with officials, Council Secretariat, Brussels, December 2005.

[25] Council General Secretariat, 'Background, DRC Elections 2006', RDC/02/EN, June 2006.

[26] Jolyon Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan 2007), pp. 239ff.

[27] Security& Defence Agenda, 'Security & Defence Agenda. The EU's Africa Strategy: What are the lessons of the Congo Mission?', *Discussion paper*, Brussels, 2007, pp. 9; 13; 34.

[28] Jean-Yves Haine & Bastian Griegerich, 'In Congo, a cosmetic EU operation', *International Herald Tribune,* 12 June 2006.

[29] ECDPM, *Mid Term Evaluation of the African Peace Facility Framework-Contract (9 ACP RPR 2) 250 M Euro. Final Report*, Maastricht 2006, pp. 11; 34-5.

[30] Hans Hoebeke, Stéphanie Carette & Koen Vlassenroot *EU support to the Democratic Republic of Congo*, Brussels: IRRI-KIIB 2007, p. 13.

Chad 2007–08

Soon after the UN Security Council passed a resolution in September 2007 authorising the deployment of a military force for one year in Eastern Chad and in the North-Eastern part of the Central African Republic (CAR), the EU signalled it was ready to take on the responsibility for deploying the military mission. After months of negotiations and discussions among the member states and the EU institutions, the Council of Ministers finally decided on 28 January 2008 to launch a military operation of up to 3,700 troops to support and to protect refugees from Darfur and internally displaced people from the region. Also, the mission had the objective of facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel. Therefore, the initiative was obviously to be understood as an integral element in the EU's effort to contribute to solving the crisis in Darfur.[31] The political, diplomatic and financial components were increased in order to support the African Union and the UN to revitalise the political process, with a view to finding a lasting solution. The military mission had a preliminary budget of about 120 million euros, whereas the non-military measures were financed within the strategic framework of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF), allocating considerable sums both to Chad and to the CAR over a five-year period.[32]

There is general agreement among observers and EU civil servants in Brussels that France played a remarkably strong role in relation to the EUFOR Chad/CAR operation.[33] The initial idea was launched by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bernard Kouchner. Within less than a week, Kouchner was able, in public, to pose the question: 'What can the European Union do in Chad?' Since there was already a UN resolution covering Darfur, for the French it was mainly an issue of revitalising the existing plans.[34] The idea that an EU military force should serve as a bridging mission until a UN force could take over created a positive atmosphere among the member states in relation to deploying a European force in Chad.

The consent of the member states can be explained by citing a number of factors. No doubt there has for some time been a widespread frustration over the situation in Darfur. Chad offered an opportunity to do 'something' and not least to do something with an obvious humanitarian image, such as protecting the refugees who had fled as a result of the unresolved regional crisis. Also, it was important to many member states that the EU mission was to be a so-called 'binding' mission.[35] It meant that the one year time limit was important, and the prospect of UN troops taking over in March 2009 functioned to reassure many member states. Most EU states probably voted in favour of establishing the military mission in Chad because it confirmed the image of the Union as an ethical power in relation to Darfur. At least, it was possible to maintain this image as long as the EU troops were able to play a role protecting the refugees and not getting involved in domestic power struggles in Chad.

The African Peace Facility: 'African solutions to African problems'

In November 2003, the General Affairs Council approved a draft decision to use the EDF to create a so-called 'Peace Facility of Africa' in line with the request made by the African Union.[36] The novelty with the Fund was that resources originally allocated for economic and social development were now re-directed to support African peacekeeping operations. The initial 250 million euro

[31] Council Secretariat, 'Background, EU Military Operation in Eastern Chad and North Eastern Central African Republic (EUFOR Tchad/RCA)', January 2008.
[32] EU@UN, 'EU Military Operation in Eastern Chad and North Eastern Central African Republic (EUFOR Tchad/RCA)', 24 March 2008, http://www.europe-eu-un.org/articles/en/article_7689_en.htm.
[33] Interviews with officials, Council General Secretariat, Brussels, Oct. 2008.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Faria, *Crisis management,* p. 36.

Facility was replenished several times, including through additional voluntary contributions from the member states reaching almost 440 million euros in 2008.[37]

The establishment of the APF reflected a recognition that development issues were closely linked to security and stability. The launching of the Peace Facility was clearly motivated by a strong desire to have the African Union take responsibility for African security and thereby to avoid direct European military involvement on the continent.[38] It contributed to specifying two core concerns of the EU's policy towards Africa. One was to avoid deploying European troops on the continent by offering financial contributions to African peace and conflict management operations. The other aim was to contribute to capacity building with the African partners, which included a whole range of activities such as the training of African troops to perform peace and security operations. The latter element is still being negotiated as of late 2008.[39]

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated that during the last decade or so, the European Union has developed a conflict management policy towards Africa. The focus here has primarily been on the military aspects of the policy. This particular focus leaves out the numerous civilian instruments such as deployment of police forces, as well as the use of development assistance and humanitarian aid as additional tools in conflict management.

The remarkable development of the Union's military conflict management tools raises at least two questions. First of all, does the implementation of these policies reveal the contours of a future European policy towards Africa? This is probably the case, even though it can be argued that the situation with the civil war and the atrocities in North Kivu in late 2008 points in the other direction. The bridging concept implies that the missions have a clear time limit to them combined with the explicit assumption that the European troops have to hand over the responsibility to the UN after the end of the missions. The time limit and the binding element were crucial tools in the Ituri operation in 2003 as well as in the EUFOR DRC in 2006 and the current EUFOR Chad/CAR.

Nevertheless it is equally obvious towards the end of 2008 that the EU does not in the foreseeable future have the capacity to manage a complex and year-long regional crisis such as the one in Darfur. The statement 'I am sure the member states will not wish to send troops to Africa for longer periods of time'[40] seems to summarize the general attitude by the end of 2008 among decision-makers in Brussels. In this context, the African Peace Facility is important as it expresses this position by a buzzword which is generally acceptable: 'African solutions to African problems' - but financed by the European Union.

The second question is how do we explain the policy development described in the essay? There is no doubt that there are strong political forces within the EU that take an interest in developing an independent European defence profile. In particular, this is the case for France. The development of an independent European defence dimension can also be seen as a crucial element in pursuing the old ambition to establish the European Union as an international actor in its own right. However, it must be remembered that other member states, not least the UK, have a strong interest in continuing to develop the ESDP even though these states might not be in total agreement

[37] Factsheet, *'EU Support for Peace and Security in Africa'* (Brussels: European Union, 2005).
[38] Interviews, Council Secretariat, Brussels, Dec. 2005, Oct. 2008; Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy*, p. 217; Sven Biscop, *The European Security Strategy. A Global Agenda for Positive Power,* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 133.
[39] Several interviews with officials, Council General Secretariat & Commission (DG-trade), Brussels, Oct. 2008.
[40] Ibid.

with the French vision of a European defence policy as it was illustrated at the Council meeting on November 10 2008.

It appears that decision-makers within the EU consider conflict management as an adequate means to pursue the overall goal of establishing the Union as an international actor in its own right. The goal is more or less closely related to the identity of the EU as an actor basing its external policies on certain values and principles. At least, it can be noted that there are special relations between Europe and Africa. Sometimes it results in deployment of EU forces on African soil; in other situations, like North Kivu 2008, it shows in massive humanitarian assistance, but not military deployment. The special relationship has been highlighted at numerous occasions and most recently emphasised at the EU-Africa Summit held in Lisbon in December 2007.[41] Accepting that there is this sense of responsibility towards Africa explains the focus on the continent when it comes to conflict management. However, there are more than altruistic concerns behind the EU's Africa policy. Hard core interests such as preventing migration, drug trafficking and terrorism are increasingly motives that influence the policy.[42] ◊

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[41] EU-Africa, *The Africa-EU Strategic partnership. A Joint-Africa-EU Strategy*, Adopted Lisbon 9 December 2007.
[42] Several interviews with officials, Council Secretariat, Brussels, October 2008.

Realpolitik for an Ethical Age? Exploring the Functionality of EU Foreign Policy

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The single most pressing question regarding the EU's nascent common foreign policy has been 'does it work?' This fixation with the EU's success or failure in the foreign policy field has implicitly introduced a crypto-normative focus on the nation state as the standard of comparison. Whether EU foreign policy works or not has been determined by comparing the EU with what nation states do. This article argues that such an approach is more confusing than it is illuminating. The EU is obviously not a pan-European state and its foreign policy is best judged in terms of its function and purpose rather than its effectiveness. The usefulness of focusing on functionality will be highlighted with the example of the EU's role in the recent Russo-Georgian conflict.

Existing approaches to evaluating EU foreign policy implicitly rely on the nation state as their standard of comparison. This is the result of a focus on determining how *effective* the EU is as an international actor. This is illustrated by the two most common attitudes to EU foreign policy. The first is to decry that EU foreign policy isn't *real* foreign policy since the EU has no standing army. As Loukas Tsoukalis wrote in 2005, 'when the guns begin to speak, the Union usually has precious little to say.'[43] This focus on a standing army reflects a common attachment to 'hard power' as the standard by which foreign policy should be judged. As the headline of a *Daily Telegraph* article in 2003 put it, 'Don't laugh: the European army is on the march.'[44] Many academic writings share this perspective. Hedley Bull famously

[43] Loukas Tsoukalis, *What Kind of Europe?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 167.
[44] *Daily Telegraph*, 12 April 2003.

dismissed the notion of the European Community as a 'civilian power' as neo-idealism. His assessment was that 'the power of influence exerted by the European Community and other such civilian actors was conditioned upon a strategic environment provided by the military power of states, which they did not control.'[45]

Robert Kagan recently updated this criticism in his famous book, *Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*. According to Kagan, it is the EU's lack of military capacity that explains its preference for law and international cooperation.[46] But not only pessimists and critics focus on the EU's lack of military might. Optimists argue that the 'capabilities gap' is closing and that the EU's capacities for power projection are improving every year.[47] EU bureaucrats have internalized this critique and understand progress in terms of capabilities.[48] In recent years, the EU has developed a complex methodology intended to narrow the gap between what member states promise and what they actually provide. The development of the EU's security and defence policy (ESDP) has been dominated by talk of headline goals and capabilities commitment conferences.[49]

A second common attitude to EU foreign policy is to repeat Henry Kissinger's question of 'what is Europe's telephone number?' The implication here is that until the EU has developed the kind of centralized institutional apparatus that we associate with modern nation states, it is unlikely to be effective as a foreign policy actor. Leon Brittan summed up his discussion of the EU's international role by saying that 'there is still a long way to go before Henry Kissinger's successor in the State Department in Washington will have a completely satisfactory answer to the old question about who to telephone in Europe to talk foreign policy.'[50] T.R. Reid recounts Irwin Selzer's acerbic view of the telephone number question at the time of French opposition to the Iraq war. In Selzer's words, 'when we encouraged the Europeans to set up one telephone number that we could call, we did not intend it to be answered by a French policymaker whose most frequent response would be "non".'[51]

This focus on institutions, as with military capabilities, is as present in the academic literature as it is in the popular imagination. Accounts of EU foreign policy often structure their narratives in terms of a linear progression from the early days of European Political Cooperation (EPC) in the 1970s, via the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of 1992, to the more recent ESDP, ending their *récit* with a crescendo of new acronyms (COPS, SITCEN, EUMC, EUMS etc.). This attention to institutional development dominated the foreign policy-related discussions of the presently defunct Lisbon Treaty: would a 'double-hatted' high representative solve the telephone number question? Would more flexibility in security and defence cooperation result in greater institutional incoherence?[52]

The question of effectiveness dominates the literature on EU foreign policy, but is it the most illuminating approach? By identifying military capacity and institutional centralization as the standard of assessment, we introduce a crypto-normative attachment

[45] Hedley Bull, 'Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?', *Journal of Common Market Studies* vol. 21 no.2, 1982, p.153.
[46] See Robert Kagan, *Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*, (London: Atlantic Books, 2003).
[47] See for example T. R. Reid, *The United States of Europe: The New Superpower and the End of American Supremacy*, (New York: Penguin, 2004).
[48] For evidence of this, see the collection of interviews published in Nicole Gnesotto (Ed.) *EU Security and Defence Policy: The First Five Years (1999-2004*), (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2004).
[49] For details on the headline goals and capabilities conferences, see Jolyon Howorth, *Security and Defence Policy in the European Union*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
[50] Leon Brittan, *A Diet of Brussels: The Changing Face of Europe*, (London: Little Brown and Company, 2000), p. 154.
[51] Reid, *The United States of Europe*, p. 230.
[52] For an assessment of the implications of the Lisbon Treaty for EU foreign policy, see Antonio Missiroili, 'The Impact of the Lisbon Treaty on ESDP', (Brussels: Policy Department External Policies (European Parliament), 2008).

to the nation state into our analyses. These standards are familiar to us from our study of the state but are they the right standard of success against which the EU's actions should be judged? Moreover, is there not something limiting about asking whether policy outputs are effective or not? This is a question which lends itself to policy prescription and recommendations but not to expanding our understanding of the phenomenon of EU foreign policy.

It is useful at this point to invoke the figure of Inis Claude, whose work on the United Nations (UN) provides a useful alternative route into studying EU foreign policy. In a famous article on the UN in 1966, Claude noted that effectiveness had been the dominant paradigm through which the UN was studied.[53] He called this the focus on its 'executive capacities' and argued that this focus explained why there was so much pessimism at the time surrounding the UN. Judged solely on the standard of effectiveness, the UN was a failure: deadlocked by the Cold War conflict within the Security Council, and dominated by newly independent countries in the General Assembly, the UN was far from having fulfilled the expectations of its founders. Claude's view was that this simply missed the point about the UN. Instead of analyzing its executive capacities, we should inquire instead into its *political function*. Claude argued that the dominant function of the UN was collective legitimization, at the level of individual states and at the level of the international community as a whole. Turning to the EU, we can ask the same question: what is the function or purpose of EU foreign policy? And functionality for whom? Member states? The Commission? The EU as a whole?

The usefulness of functionality as a framework for studying EU foreign policy can be illustrated by way of an example. In the recent Russo-Georgian war, there are different views on how effective the EU has been as an actor. Implicit within many of the criticisms of the EU has been the view that it falls short of what we might expect from nation states. Thus Borut Grgic wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* that 'Russia's invasion of Georgia has once again revealed the European Union's central foreign policy flaw: while the EU is good at managing crises, it has hardly ever solved one… Europe's strategic vision in the Balkans and Caucasus is failing. It is time for Europe to graduate from crisis management to finding geopolitical solutions.'[54] Looking at what European politicians themselves have had to say about the Russo-Georgian war, however, gives us an insight into a quite different standard of assessment and one that reveals something about the political function of EU foreign policy for member states. In a speech to the European Parliament soon after the EU brokered a peace deal between Russia and Georgia, Bernard Kouchner favourably contrasted the EU's actions over Iraq in 2003 with its actions in Georgia five years later. According to Kouchner, the extraordinary Council meeting convened at the beginning of the Iraq War had only revealed internal divisions and mutual hostility between member states. In contrast, the 2008 extraordinary meeting produced a unified position on the conflict. In Kouchner's words, 'the EU has demonstrated at the highest level that it is united and that it seeks to fully take up its responsibilities. I think that in comparison to 2003, this is progress.'[55]

The standard identified by the French Foreign Minister is clearly that of internal unity. An EU able to unify in a moment of crisis is a successful EU. What does this tell us about the function of EU foreign policy? Significantly, unity is normatively neutral: the EU can be united on any policy position; the point is unity, not the *content* of the policy.

[53] Inis Claude, 'Collective Legitimization as a Political Function of the United Nations', *International Organization*, vol. 20, 1966, p. 372.

[54] Borut Grgic, 'Europe's Lack of Strategic Ambition', *Wall Street Journal*, 17 September 2008.

[55] Speech by Bernard Kouchner to the European Parliament (plenary session), 1st September, 2008.

Since the EU's activism in mid-August, the situation in Georgia has evolved. The EU's original position on the Georgia conflict was three-fold: a commitment to Georgia's territorial integrity; a refusal to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; and a decision to suspend negotiations with Russia on the EU-Russia partnership agreement until Russian troops retreated to behind the 7th August (pre-war) lines. These principles were stated in the Presidency conclusions of the extraordinary European Council meeting that took place on the 1st September.[56] Since then, the EU has decided to restart negotiations with Russia, without Russian troops having fully retreated to the 7th August lines. Dubbed 'Europe's retreat' by the *Wall Street Times*, *The Economist* noted that this willingness to renege on earlier commitments undermines the idea of the EU as a normative, principled, value-driven international actor. As its Charlemagne column put it, the EU's concessions to Russia 'reveal something important: that the hype about the EU's soft diplomacy is not believed by those who practice it.'[57]

The image that emerges from this example is of the EU as a pragmatic, *realpolitik* driven power. It commits itself to one set of principles then reneges on them the next. Had individual EU member states openly taken a stance against Russia in August, and then undertaken a u-turn two months later, they would have been heavily criticized for their cynicism.[58] By pursuing this at a pan-European level, however such a u-turn is justified by the ringing claim that what matters above all else is European unity. This was the message from the European Commission President, José Manuel Barroso, who castigated those EU members that had made a fuss about restarting talks with Russia. In his words, 'you may not like the common EU position entirely… but it is in your own interest to have one rather than three or four positions.' The function of EU foreign policy, it would seem, is clear: under the banner of European unity individual member states are able to pursue a pragmatic foreign policy. Interests are pursued and deals are struck, but only behind the doors of Europe's 'soft power diplomacy.'

Focusing attention only on whether EU foreign policy is effective or not hides this *internal* functionality. The pursuit of interests and the making of compromises are not done away with in the EU. Instead, they are justified not on their own terms but in the language of European unity. EU foreign policy is thus a means by which *realpolitik* can be conducted in a more sensitive, ethical age.◊

[56] Extraordinary European Council Presidency Conclusions, Council of the European Union, 12594/08, CONCL 3, Brussels.
[57] 'Europe's Retreat', *Wall Street Journal*, 16 November 2008; 'Charlemagne: Russian Lessons', *The Economist*, 8 November 2008.
[58] Chris Bickerton, 'A very European fudge', *The Guardian*, 17 October 2008.

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