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The EU's Struggle with Normative Leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides an overview of the European Union's relations with Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in the fields of peace and security and development cooperation. Africa and Europe are close neighbours and the EU has a strong interest in strengthening relations with SSA countries and organisations. The EU's complex and multi-layered development cooperation in Africa is presented, analysing the main agreements and some critical issues, such as the link with trade liberalisation over development or conditionality to incentivise democratic governance. At the same time, addressing the instability of the African continent represents a major concern for EU Member States, as they are experiencing its repercussions in terms of irregular immigration, drugs, arms and human trafficking, terrorism and organised crime. The main strategic strands and tools of the EU as a peace and security provider in Africa are presented and analysed. On the basis of the most recent trends in the EU's development and security relations with SSA, the paper formulates a series of policy recommendations for the EU and the US on how to engage in SSA, also triangulating with other global powers.

European Union | Sub-Saharan Africa | Economic aid | Military missions

keywords

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by Bernardo Venturi*

1. EU engagement and relevance in the region

The European Union (EU) has strong interests in strengthening relations with SSA countries and organisations in different fields, from security to development. Africa and Europe are close neighbours and the EU is the largest trading partner for African countries and the largest donor to the African continent. Africa is therefore considered a priority for the EU, at least from North stretching down to Central Africa. The recent EU Global Strategy (EUGS) states also that the EU “will invest in African peace and development as an investment in our own security and prosperity.”¹

In this framework, the main document regulating EU-Africa relations is the Cotonou Agreement (2000) with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, which grew out of the Lomé Convention (1975-2000), and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) signed by 80 African and European heads of state.²

The Cotonou Agreement represents a comprehensive partnership agreement covering the EU's relations with 79 countries, including 48 countries from Sub-Saharan Africa. Its central objective is to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty and to contribute to the gradual integration of ACP countries into the world economy. The current Cotonou Agreement will expire in February 2020 and, according to Article 95, the parties have to enter in negotiations on a successor agreement by 31

¹ High Representative of the European Union, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European's Union Foreign and Security Policy*, June 2016, p. 36, <http://europa.eu/!pr79yu>.

² Council of the European Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. A Joint Africa-EU Strategy*, Lisbon, 9 December 2007, p. 3, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/er/97496.pdf.

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August 2018.³ Notwithstanding the relevance of EU-ACP relations in the past, the rapidly changing global context with emerging powers and new alliances has put some pressure on the EU-ACP partnership. A progressive marginalisation of the privileged relationship between the ACP and the EU is taking place, as both parties seek to defend their interests through alternative continental, regional or thematic bodies and forums. In addition, the CPA has been largely reduced to a development cooperation tool because the trade and political dialogue components of the ACP's three-pillar structure (aid, trade and political cooperation) are mainly taking place outside the ACP-EU framework. Overall, the political value of the CPA has been substantially reduced.⁴ In this framework, the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), as envisaged in the Cotonou Agreement, were meant to build on and foster regional integration processes in the ACP. EPAs are "development-focused" trade agreements negotiated between the ACP countries/regions and the EU.⁵ The future partnerships after the Cotonou Agreement will probably adapt to the increasingly sub-regional approach that the EU has been following to address foreign policy, security, trade and development concerns in the ACP regions.

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy, launched by the African Union (AU) and the EU in 2007, defines the overall Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.⁶ The Strategy strives to bring Africa and the EU closer together through the strengthening of economic cooperation and the promotion of sustainable development, democracy, peace and security. The First Action Plan (2008-2010) and the Second Action Plan (2011-2013) for the implementation of the JAES were focused on eight priority areas of cooperation.⁷ The initiatives promoted in the JAES framework provided a balance between the issues of peace and security and development considering them as two sides of the same coin.⁸ The current Roadmap 2014-2017 sets out concrete targets in a similar framework with a focus on 5 priority areas: peace and security; democracy, good governance and human rights; human development; sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration; and global

³ Further information and analysis on the future of the Cotonou Agreement can be found in the ECDPM's dossier: *The Future of ACP-EU Relations Post-2020. An Overview of Relevant Analysis by ECDPM*, Maastricht, ECDPM, December 2014, <http://ecdpm.org/?p=15695>.

⁴ Jean Bossuyt et al., "The Future of ACP-EU Relations: A Political Economy Analysis", in *ECDPM Policy Management Reports*, No. 21 (January 2016), <http://ecdpm.org/?p=20733>.

⁵ EPAs are trade instruments that replace the unilateral trade regime that governed the trade relationship between EU and ACP countries for almost forty years. They are reciprocal, but asymmetric trade agreements, where the EU, as one regional block, provides full duty free and quota free market access to EPA countries and/or regions and where ACP countries/regions commit to open at least 75 percent of their markets to the EU. The Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA), established in 2000, was the last one that granted unilateral preferences to ACP countries. See Jean Bossuyt et al., "The Future of ACP-EU Relations: A Political Economy Analysis", cit.

⁶ For more information and updates see the Africa-EU Partnership official website: <http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org>.

⁷ Peace and security, democratic governance and human rights; regional economic integration, trade and infrastructure; Millennium Development Goals; climate change; energy; migration, mobility and employment; and science, information society and space.

⁸ Fourth EU-Africa Summit Declaration, Brussels, 2-3 April 2014, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/142096.pdf.

and emerging issues.⁹

The Africa-EU relations have also been developed through formal dialogues at different levels since the historic first Africa-EU Summit in Cairo in 2000. The principal formal dialogue takes place in EU-Africa Summits at the level of heads of state or government in principle every three years, alternatively in Africa and in Europe. The fourth and most recent EU-Africa Summit took place in Brussels in April 2014 under the theme of "Investing in People, Prosperity and Peace."¹⁰ The second level dialogue envisages regular ministerial-level meetings and gathers representatives from African and EU countries, the AU Commission, and EU institutions. These meetings take place on an ad hoc basis to monitor the progress achieved between Summits. The last meeting took place at the margins of the EU-Africa Summit in April 2014 on climate change. At another level, College-to-College meetings between the European Commission and the African Union Commission take place on an annual basis alternatively in Brussels and Addis Ababa to support political and operational relations. Finally, the Joint Annual Forum and the regular High Level dialogues and expert level meetings gather sectoral experts from Member States, institutions, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

Overall, the JAES has received mixed evaluations. It represents a significant novelty in framing a more consistent EU policy toward Africa. The EU provides dedicated support for the implementation of the JAES through the Pan-African Programme (845 million euros for 2014-2020) and through the African Peace Facility (1,051 million euros for 2014-2016).¹¹ However, "it did not make a qualitative leap because it simply reiterated existing commitments on aid and trade and was adopted with little consultation of relevant stakeholders."¹²

⁹ Fourth EU-Africa Summit Roadmap 2014-2017, Brussels, 2-3 April 2014, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/142094.pdf.

¹⁰ Previous meetings held in Cairo (2000), Lisbon (2007) and Tripoli (2010).

¹¹ See the Africa-EU Partnership official website: *Financing the Partnership*, <http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/node/281>.

¹² Maurizio Carbone, "EU-Africa relations in the Twenty-First Century: Evolutions and Explanations", in Maurizio Carbone (ed.), *The European Union in Africa. Incoherent Policies, Asymmetrical Partnership, Declining Relevance?*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2013, p. 7.

2. The role of the EU in peace and security issues in SSA

EU-Africa relations were for a long time mainly based on the economic and development dimension, but the issues of conflict prevention and security have gained importance since the early/mid-1990s.¹³ Addressing the instability of the African continent represents a major concern for EU Member States, as they are experiencing its repercussions in terms of illegal immigration, drugs, arms and human trafficking, terrorism and organised crime.¹⁴

The Joint Africa-EU Strategy aims, in principle, "to promote holistic approaches to security, encompassing conflict prevention and long-term peace-building, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, linked to governance and sustainable development, with a view to addressing the root causes of conflicts."¹⁵ Unity of intents between Africa and the EU is emphasised as the way "to address issues of common concern in the global arena."¹⁶ In this framework, the EU is determined to support African self-determination discourse based on local capabilities, for instance through the funding provided to the AU¹⁷ and in particular to the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).¹⁸ However, the potential balance in the partnership and the unity of intents remains unattained for several reasons. Firstly, the EU is still reluctant to fully rely on the AU in managing peace and security issues due to its lack of capabilities and resources. In addition, the EU tends to project its normative power in its relationship with the African continent by promoting its own values and agenda and thus reinforcing the African perception of an asymmetric relationship.¹⁹ Criticisms emerged over conditionality measures the EU used to promote human rights. African civil society organisations (CSOs) and the AU itself contested preconditions determined by others as a condition for

¹³ Fernanda Faria, "Crisis Management in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Role of the European Union", in *EUISS Occasional Papers*, No. 51 (April 2004), <http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/crisis-management-in-sub-saharan-africa-the-role-of-the-european-union>.

¹⁴ Nicoletta Pirozzi, "Towards an Effective Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security: Rhetoric or Facts?", in *The International Spectator*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (June 2010), p. 87; Fredrik Söderbaum, "The European Union as an Actor in Africa: Internal Coherence and External Legitimacy", in Maurizio Carbone (ed.), *The European Union in Africa. Incoherent Policies, Asymmetrical Partnership, Declining Relevance?*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2013, p. 25-42.

¹⁵ Council of the European Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership*, cit., point 13.

¹⁶ Ibid., point 14.

¹⁷ The partnership with the AU has three main dimensions: strengthening the political dialogue, making the African peace and security architecture fully operational and providing predictable funding for the AU's peacekeeping operations.

¹⁸ For more information on APSA, see the African Union Peace and Security Dept. website: <http://www.peaceau.org/en/topic/the-african-peace-and-security-architecture-apsa>.

¹⁹ Nicoletta Pirozzi, "Towards an Effective Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security: Rhetoric or Facts?", cit., p. 88. The same Joint Africa-EU Strategy is ambiguous on African ownership. For instance, "EU support to Africa has been and continues to be guided by the principle of African ownership. At the same time, valuable guidance for the cooperation will, as appropriate, be drawn from the EU Concept for Strengthening African Capabilities for the Prevention, Management and Resolution of Conflicts." Council of the European Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership*, cit., point 18.

partnerships.²⁰

In the framework of the APSA, the main EU financial instrument to support cooperation with Africa in the area of peace and security is the African Peace Facility (APF). The APF was established at the request of African leaders at the AU Maputo Summit in 2003. EU efforts are mainly directed at providing political backing as well as predictable resources to African Peace Support Operations (PSOs) and capacity-building activities as well as mediation activities at both continental and regional levels. A total amount of 1.7 billion euros has been contracted and almost 1.6 billion euros was paid through this instrument by the end of 2015.²¹ The APF is funded through the EU's European Development Fund (EDF);²² this choice on the one hand reflects the close links between development and security; on the other, it excludes military and arms expenditures. In fact, the APF may for example cover allowances for the troops, salaries for civilians, logistical, transportation, medical, communication costs but in no way can it fund military equipment, arms, ammunition or military training.

The strategic orientation of the APF is based on a dual approach, which combines short-term funding for crises with a longer-term support to institutional capacity-building in peace and security. In recent months, the APF has continued to support the AU and Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) having a mandate in peace and security. The funded activities fall in three categories: 1) African-led PSOs (1 billion euros to 2015);²³ 2) operationalisation of the APSA (97 million euros to 2015); 3) initiatives under the Early Response Mechanism (ERM, 15 million euros to 2015).²⁴ It clearly emerges that early response has a significant role, but a limited budget compared to other areas. In addition, some EU member states deploy missions in Africa and they have bilateral agreements with African states. As part of Operation Barkhane, for instance, France has 3,500 troops spread across five African countries (Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad).²⁵

²⁰ Daniela Sicurelli, *The European Union's Africa Policies. Norms, Interests and Impact*, Farnham and Burlington, Ashgate, 2013.

²¹ European Commission, *Joint Communiqué by Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission; Neven Mimica, EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development; and Smail Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security*, 1 August 2016, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-16-2702_en.htm.

²² The 11th and last EDF was created by an intergovernmental agreement signed in June 2013 – as it is not part of the EU budget – and entered into force on the 1st March 2015, after ratification by all Member States. The negotiations in the Council of Ministers on the different elements of the 11th EDF have taken place in parallel with the negotiations of other external Instruments financed under the budget, to ensure consistency.

²³ Current support for PSOs takes place in Somalia, in the Central African Region (Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Central African Republic) to support the AU-led Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army, in Guinea Bissau and Mali.

²⁴ European Commission, *African Peace Facility Annual Report 2015*, June 2016, <http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/node/8444>.

²⁵ French Ministry of Defence, *Carte opération Barkhane*, updated 5 August 2016, <http://www>.

The EU is currently conducting nine Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions in Africa (out of 17).²⁶ These missions, however, have limited mandates (e.g., the stabilisation of the security conditions or the improvement of the humanitarian situation) and short time frames and usually have marginal impact on the conflicts in the region. The missions, even those with a more comprehensive and long term approach, seem more oriented to establish the EU as a peacebuilding actor than as a game changer in African security,²⁷ probably with the exception of EUCAP NESTOR and EUNAVFOR on the high seas of the Horn of Africa. However, usually the EU missions are deployed alongside missions of African regional organisations (ECOWAS, IGAD, UA), of the UN, or of EU countries (e.g., Barkhane).

The EU has therefore developed a substantial engagement in the field of crisis management in SSA, partially in close cooperation with the AU, partially through its own missions and operations.

3. The role of the EU in development issues in SSA

The relationship between the EU and SSA on development issues is regulated by the Cotonou Agreement and by the JAES, as mentioned above. The Cotonou Agreement is based on three pillars: development cooperation, economic and trade cooperation and political dimension. It entered into force in 2003, and in 2005 was revised including security as a priority. The second revision in 2010 strengthened cooperation in regional integration, climate change and the role of national parliaments as actors of cooperation.²⁸ This new framework has significantly improved the EU's aid capacities in SSA. Yet, some issues remain ambiguous, in primis local ownership. The EU has affirmed this concept in the new framework, but three issues have compromised the EU-SSA relations in this sector: the Commission's emphasis on trade liberalisation over development; the risk of securitisation of EU development policy; and conditionality to incentivise democratic governance.²⁹

defense.gouv.fr/operations/sahel/cartes/carte-operation-barkhane.

²⁶ The current missions are: EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Libya; EUCAP Nestor, assisting host countries develop self-sustaining capacity for enhancement of maritime security; EUCAP Sahel and EUCAP Sahel Niger supporting the internal security forces in those countries; EUNAVFOR, countering piracy off the coast of Somalia; EUTM Mali, a training mission for Malian armed forces; EUTM RCA in the Central African Republic, to contribute to the country's defence sector reform; EUTM Somalia, a military training mission in Somalia.

²⁷ Fredrik Söderbaum, "The European Union as an Actor in Africa: Internal Coherence and External Legitimacy", cit.

²⁸ Maurizio Carbone, "EU-Africa relations in the Twenty-First Century: Evolutions and Explanations", cit.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 5.

The Commission finances most of its development programmes for African partner countries through the EDF, established in 1958. The current EDF runs from 2014 to 2020 and includes a total of 30.5 billion euros. A slice of 2.7 billion euros was reserved for the above mentioned governance incentive. The Roadmap 2014-2017 of the JAES agreed on the strategic objective of human development in three specific areas: science, technology and innovation; higher education; mobility, migration and employment. It must be highlighted that the general criteria to allocate funds were not discussed with SSA's partners.

A recent tool financed by the European Commission along with 25 EU Member States is the EU Trust Fund for Africa.³⁰ This emergency Trust Fund for stability, launched at the end of 2015 during the Valletta Summit on Migration,³¹ aims to tackle the root causes of irregular migration from Africa and displacement in countries of origin, transit and destination. The Fund benefits a wide range of countries across Africa and therefore combines migration and development issues. In practice, through this approach the Commission would like mainly to reduce migration flows toward Europe. This Fund is now tied to the new Migration Partnership Framework introduced by the EU in June 2016 that fully integrates migration in the European Union's foreign policy and act combining different policy elements like development aid, trade, mobility, energy and security.³²

However, the effectiveness and impact of this development approach on migration are not demonstrated and a proper evaluation of this programme could be very useful for future policies related to the migration-development nexus.

Another instrument to support sustainable growth in Africa is the Africa Investment Facility (AfIF).³³ Created in August 2015 and operational in November 2015, AfIF aims at fostering investments which could have a positive impact on socio-economic development, such as infrastructure in transport, communication, water, and energy as well as agriculture and private sector development. AfIF works as an innovative financial mechanism combining EU grants with other public and private sector resources (non-refundable financial contributions from the European Union and other resources such as loans) and aimed at achieving complementarity between the different EU aid modalities and tools and improving the coordination of donor actions. However, the Commission has not clarified who the other donors are.³⁴

³⁰ The Emergency Trust Fund for Stability and Addressing Root Causes of Irregular Migration and Displaced Persons in Africa, is made up of 1.8 billion euros from the EU budget and European Development Fund, combined with contributions from EU Member States and other donors.

³¹ European Council, *2015 Valletta Summit on Migration. Background on EU Action*, 11 November 2015, <http://europa.eu/ljj79kq>.

³² European Commission, *Migration Partnership Framework. A New Approach to better Manage Migration* (Factsheet), 16 September 2016, https://eeas.europa.eu/node/9885_en.

³³ For more information see the European Commission webpage: *Africa Investment Facility*, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/regions/africa-investment-facility_en.

³⁴ See the Action Document for the Creation of the Africa Investment Facility. European

AfIF is a blending facility which combines EU grants with other public and private sector resources such as loans and equity in order to leverage additional non-grant financing, and achieve investments in infrastructure and support to the private sector.

To summarise, in the last 15 years the EU has made great efforts to improve its aid impact, effectiveness and coordination among Member States within a global vision of development for SSA. Yet, as discussed, several limitations are still jeopardising these efforts, chiefly related to equal partnership, ownership and coordination. A dilemma is also present. For the EU, as for other collective donors, better internal coordination and consistency could mean less space for negotiating with the receiving partners, and, consequently, less local ownership. The EU has begun to harness its development cooperation in the framework of the 2030 Agenda³⁵ and it will shape its priorities accordingly, and the above-mentioned dilemmas will be a keen litmus test for the effectiveness of the EU involvement.

4. The EU's interaction with other international actors in SSA

Today, the African continent is becoming a desired partner for the main global actors (China, Brazil, Turkey, the Gulf States and the US, but India could be included too), which inevitably challenges the EU's role as the main peace and security partner and donor on the continent. The triangular relationships between the EU and foreign powers in SSA is therefore an essential issue to be considered in order to analyse the present and the future of SSA in terms of peace, security and development cooperation.

Brazil has a growing engagement in Africa, but still limited interactions with the EU in the continent. The narrative of South-South cooperation creates a strong relationship in different sectors between Brazil and SSA and this relationship also has consequences for the EU. For instance, Brazil's trade relations are growing with SSA and diminishing with the EU.³⁶ China's growing and multilayered presence in Africa is probably the main factor challenging the historical and privileged relationship between the European and the African continents in different fields. Also as a consequence of the growing trading power of China in Africa, the EU has called for the development of an EU-China-Africa trilateral cooperation, but with limited success. This is chiefly due to the different approaches of China and the EU toward Africa, to the lack a profound knowledge of China and Africa on the

Commission, *Creation of the Africa Investment Facility. Action Fiche*, 29 July 2015, https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/creation-africa-investment-facility-action-fiche_en.

³⁵ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (A/RES/70/1), 25 September 2015, <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/1>.

³⁶ World Bank and IPEA, *Bridging the Atlantic. Brazil and Sub-Saharan Africa: South-South Partnering for Growth*, January 2012, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/284591468193504731>.

part of the Europeans³⁷ and to competing visions and approaches on development within the EU.³⁸ Regarding the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, the EU established bilateral relations with this area via the 1988 Cooperation Agreement, which regulates mainly economic and political relations. GCC countries have growing ties in Africa, but the interactions with the EU on the continent are limited. Turkey is part of the European continent and has undoubtedly strong ties with the EU. Turkey is also a candidate country for EU membership following the Helsinki European Council of December 1999 and has had a long association with the project of European integration. Yet, EU-Turkey cooperation in the broad surrounding regions is more uncertain after the failed military coup in Turkey of 15 July 2016 and the consequent hard repression and limitation of freedom guided by President Erdoğan. EU and US influence in Africa is well established and cooperation between these two western powers in Africa is pivotal for the continent. Historically, American presence in Africa has been limited, but since the beginning of the 2000s the US interest has increased significantly, in particular in relation to security.

4.1 The EU's interaction with other international actors on peace and security

The EU's growing role in peace and security in Africa has diversified relations with the main international actors. Brazil is traditionally committed to multilateralism and non-intervention in domestic affairs of other countries, and it is reluctant to intervene outside the UN or the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP) framework. EU-Brazil cooperation in this field is therefore possible through the UN or the AU. Interestingly, Lusophone countries received military training from Brazil especially for patrolling Brazilian vessels and this area represents another potential option for cooperation.

Regarding China, its pragmatic discourse on local sovereignty and non-conditionality – as present below referring to development – is not free of contradictions and is more and more subject to pressure.³⁹ For instance, security concerns changed China's perception of non-conditionality and non-interference

³⁷ Anna Katharina Stahl, "EU-China-Africa Trilateral Relations: A New Trend in International Relations", in *E-International Relations*, 16 September 2014, <http://www.e-ir.info/?p=52056>.

³⁸ Maurizio Carbone describes three competing visions: the European Commission sought to affirm the EU's aspiration to become an influential global actor; the European Parliament projected its preference for a value-based development policy, blended with paternalistic overtones; the Council of the European Union was driven more by the emotional reactions of some Member States, who did not want to lose their position as Africa's main reference point. See Maurizio Carbone, "The European Union and China's rise in Africa: Competing Visions, External Coherence and Trilateral Cooperation", in *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (2011), p. 203-221; Maurizio Carbone, "EU-Africa relations in the Twenty-First Century: Evolutions and Explanations", cit.

³⁹ Sarah Grauls and Anna Katharina Stahl, "European Development Policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges of the Growing Chinese Presence", in *Émulations*, No. 7 (2010), <http://www.revue-emulations.net/archives/n7/grauls>.

and the Chinese government decided to support an UN-AU peacekeeping mission to solve the conflict in Darfur. The EU-China 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation⁴⁰ also guides the relations between the two powers in the field of peace and security on some key initiatives such as: enhancing coordination on strategic, political and security issues within the EU-China High Level Strategic Dialogue; enhancing consultations on Africa, Central Asia, Latin America and the respective neighbourhoods of the EU and China; and reinforcing cooperation in all relevant multilateral and trans-regional and regional fora. Potentially, the African Union could play the role of common ground for EU-China cooperation on peace and security in SSA. Yet, it should be remembered that Chinese engagement in peace operations in Africa is implemented almost exclusively through the UN. An exception was represented by a maritime operation against piracy off the Somali coast; China acted independently, but coordinated to a certain extent with other international actors.

With regard to Gulf countries, they have openly contributed to peace and security (or the lack thereof) in SSA in general and in the Horn of Africa in particular. African security could therefore represent a potential field of cooperation between the EU and Gulf countries. For instance, given the role of the US as a forerunner in the fight against terrorism, and the EU's role in its joint mission with the AU in Somalia against al-Shabaab forces, the US and EU – together with SSA countries – should demand more transparency from the Gulf states in the distribution of their Overseas Development Assistance.⁴¹ However, in recent years, EU-GCC relations on peace and security have focused more on the Eastern neighbours (Syria, Iran, etc.) than on Africa. In fact, cooperation between the EU and GCC countries has not paid specific attention to SSA.

Turkey has become more involved throughout Africa since 2011 in the peace and security area. EU-Turkey collaboration has been increasing during the last 5-7 years. Since 2009, Turkey has played an active role in combatting piracy in the Gulf of Aden and has provided military support to fight against this scourge in cooperation with the EU.⁴² In November 2014 Turkey's parliament voted to deploy peacekeeping troops to UN-approved EU missions in Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR).

Finally, the US and the EU cooperate closely in Africa. In 2011 the two powers signed a framework agreement on US participation in EU crisis management operations. This agreement provides the legal mechanism for the US to contribute civilian personnel to EU Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) missions

⁴⁰ Council of the European Union, *China-EU 2020 Strategic Agenda for Cooperation* released at 16th China-EU Summit, 23 November 2013, http://eeas.europa.eu/china/docs/20131123_agenda_2020__en.pdf.

⁴¹ Lidet Tadesse Shiferaw, "The Role of Gulf States in Peace and Security and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa", in *IAI Working Papers*, No. 16|19 (August 2016), <http://www.iai.it/en/node/6682>.

⁴² Mehmet Özkan, "Turkey's African Experience: From Venture to Normalisation", in *IAI Working Papers*, No. 16|20 (August 2016), <http://www.iai.it/en/node/6684>.

and strengthens options for practical, on-the-ground EU-US coordination in crises.⁴³ The EU and the US are also negotiating an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement, which would facilitate cooperation on logistical support. The US contributes to the EU Security Sector Reform mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (EUSEC DRC), and European and American personnel and forces on the ground have worked together in Mali, Somalia, and the Horn of Africa. On political issues, including developments in the Great Lakes or the Horn of Africa, weekly exchanges between US and EU special envoys complement the monthly State Department-European External Action Service (EEAS) calls and there is significant in-country coordination, including joint demarches.⁴⁴

4.2 The EU's interaction with other international actors on development cooperation

The EU's interaction on development with international powers in SSA is different from actor to actor. In some cases links are well-established, as with the US, in others they are weak, as in the case of the Gulf states.

The EU (but also the US) has a lot to gain from pulling Brazil – a country that has often been sitting midway between the West and the Global South – into their sphere. Triangular cooperation, however, remains a valid perspective for all sides, for instance with Brazil contracted to implement EU and US development programmes on the ground with African beneficiaries. It is possible that in the near future Brazil will prioritise traditional partners in Europe, the US and Mercosur.⁴⁵ An interesting example of Brazil-EU-SSA cooperation is provided by the energy sector. Gaston Fulquet and Alejandro Pelfini describe how “legally institutionalizing political cooperation with African countries in the biofuel sector reinforced Brazil’s so-called ‘Ethanol Diplomacy’, which aims to create a strong ethanol market in southern and western African countries. Additionally these bilateral actions would be complemented by other political agreements with the USA and EU for fostering trilateral technical cooperation in Africa.”⁴⁶ Christina Stolte confirms this trend on energy cooperation: “Using Brazilian technology, oil-rich Sudan has already become an exporter of ethanol. In 2010 it exported 15 million litres of ethanol to Europe, diversifying its range of exports and creating new sources of revenue.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Madeleine Goerg, “Security, Development, and Diplomacy: Solving the Puzzle of the US-Sub-Saharan Africa Strategy?”, in *IAI Working Papers*, No. 16|23 (September 2016), <http://www.iai.it/en/node/6743>.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Frank Mattheis, “Brazil as a Security and Development Provider in Africa: Consequences and Opportunities for Europe and North America”, in *IAI Working Papers*, No. 16|21 (September 2016), <http://www.iai.it/en/node/6741>.

⁴⁶ Gaston Fulquet and Alejandro Pelfini, “Brazil as a New International Cooperation Actor in Sub-Saharan Africa: Biofuels at the Crossroads between Sustainable Development and Natural Resource Exploitation”, in *Energy Research & Social Science*, Vol. 5 (January 2015), p. 124.

⁴⁷ Christina Stolte, “Brazil in Africa: Just another BRICS Country Seeking Resources?”, in *Chatham House Briefing Papers*, November 2012, p. 17, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/publications/papers/>

Therefore, the energy sector could be an emerging relevant field of Brazil-EU-SSA cooperation both on security and development issues.

Regarding China, the main difference between EU and China cooperation in SSA is related to conditionality: while EU aid, investment and trade are conditional in order to promote good government and democracy, Chinese economic interaction is unconditional. For the EU, development cooperation is a key component of its normative aspirations abroad (e.g., promoting human rights, democracy, good governance, sustainable development and regional integration). As presented in the Cotonou Agreement, "negative" conditionality can involve the suspension of aid if the recipient country violates the conditions such as by committing human rights abuses. The EU also has "positive" incentives at its disposal to encourage the promotion of certain norms. Conversely, Chinese leaders attach particular importance to a pragmatic, efficient and speedy policy and, contrary to the EU, refrain from advancing any discourse on normative principles.⁴⁸

African ownership therefore remains a key issue. It is likely that Chinese foreign development aid labelled as "no-strings-attached" leaves more local freedom of action, but this approach also brings other negative consequences, for instance in terms of low standards of environmental protection and social rights for local workers. Yet, it has also been argued that political conditionality of aid leads to an asymmetrical power relationship between the donor and the recipient (in terms of global status, dignity, etc.).⁴⁹ Since the Cold War, China has stressed the primacy of the respect of sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs. By contrast, the EU continues to promote an approach based on a strong multilateralism calling for the development of well-functioning international institutions and an international order based on shared norms.⁵⁰

Summing up, it is hard to assess who is contributing more to Africa's development because "both the EU and China have helped to develop Africa in different – sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting – ways."⁵¹ What is probably true is that, due to the growing Chinese influence, the EU is shifting its approach to development aid to a more pragmatic and partnership-based approach. Certainly, "China's increasing involvement reflects a changing environment to which the EU needs to adapt its development policy if it wishes to maintain its strong presence on the African continent."⁵²

view/186957.

⁴⁸ Sarah Grauls and Anna Katharina Stahl, "European Development Policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa", cit.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ High Representative of the European Union, *Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe*, cit.

⁵¹ Niall Duggan, "Is China Contributing More Than Europe to Africa's Economic Future?", in *Europe's World*, 2 July 2015, <http://europesworld.org/?p=9271>.

⁵² Sarah Grauls and Anna Katharina Stahl, "European Development Policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa", cit.

Concerning the Gulf states, little to no interaction is present between EU and GCC in Africa on development cooperation.⁵³ The Cooperation Agreement between the EU and GCC provides for annual joint ministerial meetings between the EU and the GCC foreign ministers and for joint cooperation committees. However, the Agreement on economic cooperation focuses on issues such as energy, transport, research and innovation, and the economy.

Turkey's engagement with Africa has expanded significantly since 2005 and relevant interaction with the EU on the African continent has been developed. Yet, the relations with Turkey on development cooperation are almost non-existent. In addition, the deterioration of the relations between the EU and Turkey has pushed the Turkish establishment to strengthen their presence in SSA. Turkey has been looking for new allies in SSA mainly because it is interested in reducing economic dependence on traditional European and Russian trading. In the near future, development cooperation could be extended through a closer implementation of the 2030 Agenda (for instance, due to geographical proximity, on environmental issues) or through UN agencies in Africa.

Cooperation between the EU and the US on development is institutionalised through the High Level Consultative Group on Development (HLCGD), which was re-launched in 2009 to hold annual ministerial meetings meant to advance and guide the cooperation both at policy and country level. The dialogue brings together the Directorate-General Development and Cooperation-EuropeAid (DG DEVCO), in close cooperation and consultation with the EEAS and their US and Canada Division, USAID and the State Department's Bureau of European Affairs. EU Member States are also involved in the consultations.⁵⁴ The EEAS' Africa Division and the State Department's African Affairs Bureau hold monthly calls for greater coordination on political issues. The OECD's Development Co-operation Directorate also serves as a platform for exchange and cooperation between the US and other donors, including a large number of EU Member States. USAID is reviewing its financial guidelines to allow transfers of funds between the US and the EU for cross-programming and implementation.⁵⁵ In the future, the EU and the US should also be thinking creatively about new bottom-up models for development cooperation in Africa that are better suited for the changing global context.⁵⁶

⁵³ M. Evren Tok, "Gulf Donors and the 2030 Agenda: Towards a Khaleeji Mode of Development Cooperation", in *UNU-CPR Policy Briefs*, November 2015, <http://collections.unu.edu/view/UNU:3322>.

⁵⁴ Alexander Gaus and Wade Hoxtell, "The EU-US Development Dialogue: Past, Present and Future", in *GPPi Working Papers*, July 2013, <http://www.gppi.net/publications/innovation-in-development/article/the-eu-us-development-dialogue-past-present-and-future>.

⁵⁵ Alexander Gaus and Wade Hoxtell, "Connecting Security and Development: Towards a Transatlantic Strategy in Fragile States", in *Brussels Forum Policy Papers*, February 2015, <https://shar.es/1Io6Ud>.

⁵⁶ Madeleine Goerg, "Security, Development, and Diplomacy", cit.

Conclusion: A comprehensive Africa policy for the EU

The EU's contribution to peace and security in Sub-Saharan Africa has become stronger in the last decade. However, internal division and inconsistency both among European institutions and Member States have limited the EU's effectiveness and ability to be a game changer in the region. The EU has developed close cooperation in the field of crisis management with the AU, but it also acts independently with reduced and focused tasks implemented through its CSDP missions. In the development sector, the EU has significantly improved its capabilities to deliver, but some specific challenges, such as local ownership, should be addressed. The relations with the other international players in SSA are diversified and they need to be strengthened both in terms of coordination and of mutual understanding, combining tailor-made approaches with each partner and relations in multilateral settings.

On the basis of the analysis conducted above on EU-SSA relations in the field of peace and security and development, it is possible to set forth some recommendations for the EU:

- The EU-AU partnership needs to be extended beyond the African continent and reach the relevant international frameworks. The ultimate objective is to establish a solid alliance on common interests such as terrorism, climate change, conflict prevention, non-proliferation and disarmament. This can only be achieved through a greater African presence in multilateral fora, promoted by the EU in accordance with the principle of equitable representation and democratic accountability of international institutions.
- The EU should also look more at the potential of a prosperous and powerful African continent as a neighbour and as a partner in multilateral fora. Africa represents the test bed *par excellence* for EU peace and security policy and can become a credible ally for the EU in its campaigns at the global level.
- The EU should promote a series of policy priorities and principles for action. First of all, building bridges with African players means establishing a real partnership with the AU, in the spirit of a continent-to-continent relationship in the field of peace and security. Cultural misunderstandings and different expectations have severely hampered a smooth implementation process so far. Practical cooperation on specific projects and a continuous interface with relevant actors are key factors for stimulating political understanding and agreement on basic concepts.
- Only an inclusive dialogue, which involves all stakeholders – not just the Brussels-Addis Ababa axis but also EU and AU Member States, and also the RECs – can ensure a real implementation of common programmes. Political and financial constraints to the full participation of civil society actors should also be overcome in the name of the principle of a “a broad-based and wide-ranging

people-centred partnership”⁵⁷ and for the benefit of all the parties involved.

- The EU should have a truly open, inclusive and evidence-based driven debate on the future of the Cotonou Agreement. The EU should listen to what ownership means for African governments and civil societies and what vision they have for equal partnership.
- The EU should strengthen societies', markets' and states' resilience through durable solutions by investing in job opportunities, education, infrastructure and social protection, with the objective of making people self-reliant. In addition, the EU should also recognise the need for comprehensive, context-based, short and long-term analyses of migratory phenomena including the interplay between migration and development and the role of diaspora.
- The EU and US should interact more with the Gulf states, especially on the Horn of Africa. In particular, they could support the mediation of Qatar in order to settle the Ethiopia-Eritrea dispute. They can also demand more transparency by the Gulf states in the distribution of their ODA in the region.
- Despite the common negative perception of President Erdoğan, the EU and US should involve Turkey on niche issues in Africa, rather than as an overall approach, for instance, on the stabilisation process in Somalia, where Turkey has been relatively successful.
- Due to Brazil's expertise, the EU and the US should engage in more triangular cooperation with Brazil on the African continent, also involving Brazil in the OECD. In the security field, the EU and US should avoid expanding NATO in the South Atlantic.
- The EU should continue dialogue and cooperation with China in the framework of the Strategic Agenda 2020. In addition, the establishment of China's diplomatic mission to the AU in Addis Ababa represents an opportunity for collaboration between China, the EU and the US to support the AU and its role in fostering African peace and security.

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⁵⁷ Council of the European Union, *The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership*, cit., point 8.

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