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# DEVELOPMENTS IN EUROPEAN UNION–AFRICA RELATIONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR ASIA

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## Introduction

The European Union's (EU) international relations have been subject to the force of both regional and global pressures which have been testing its resilience. The former's response to several dramatic international developments, notably, the conflicts in Lebanon and Libya, the global financial crisis and the resulting strains in the Eurozone, the international air strikes interventions in Syria, the massive flow of irregular migrants and refugees, and the terrorists attacks in many countries, notably in France and Belgium during 2015 and 2016 – all have put the EU's mixed bag of rhetorical claims, strategies and institutional structures, related to its external role, to the test. At the same time, the continual extension of the objectives, instruments and activities associated with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has enabled the EU to strive in the international arena as an autonomous, albeit limited, security provider, besides being a unique political actor with a sizeable leverage. The gradual consolidation of a partnership policy (Ferreira-Pereira & Vieira, 2016) founded mainly on the establishment of more or less institutionalized bilateral strategic partnerships with pivotal global and regional powers, such as China, Brazil and Russia, has contributed to this expansion, which unfolded significantly in the post-9/11 landscape.[1]

Most, if not all, of these aspects have impacted on the quality of the EU's interactions with two regions of the world, namely Africa and Asia, during the past decade or so. That said, in the case of Africa, the original ties binding what is now the EU[2] to this continent date back to the early days of the European integration process, more concretely the 1960s, when the 'Six' founding members of the then European Communities decided to establish a post-colonial contractual arrangement designed to promote sustainable economic and social development. This arrangement originally took the form of the Yaoundé Agreement[3] and afterwards of the Lomé Conventions, which have governed the relationship between the EU and associated states from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) over 25 years, on the basis of a development-oriented focus.[4] The replacement of the Lomé Conventions by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement in 2000 brought about favourable conditions for breeding deeper political dialogue

with political stability, democracy, security and peace within ACP states in view. Equally important, before the advent of the twenty-first century, the EU launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also known as the Barcelona Process, by means of which it has framed its relations with some North African states.[5] In 2008, the Barcelona Process received renewed vigour as it expanded and evolved into the Union for the Mediterranean.[6]

During the past decade, the EU came to give unprecedented attention and salience to African security actors and policies. This is largely because since 2003 the traditional development cooperation, based on a diverse range of trade and aid instruments, came to be complemented by active security cooperation as a result of the EU's engagement in both military crisis management and capacity building on the African ground. The gradual implementation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) against the backdrop of the European Security Strategy (ESS) approved in 2003 has contributed to this. At that time, the ESDP, which had been formally established in 1999, had strategically targeted Africa as a regional testing ground for securing the credibility and respectability of the EU's role on the global stage. Symptomatic of this was the fact that the first European autonomous military operation, called Artemis, was launched in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), a state which then became the base for various EU-led police and military missions, notably EUPOL Kinshasa, EUSEC RD Congo, EUFOR RD Congo and EUPOL RD Congo. By 2003, several external stimuli had led to the adoption of a more salient African agenda in the framework of CFSP and ESDP activities. On the one hand, there was the growing strategic interest exhibited by the United States (US) vis-à-vis Africa alongside the significant economic Chinese presence in the region. On the other hand, there was the necessity to engage African countries in multilateral efforts needed to address complex challenges with high security resonance related to issues ranging from illegal migration and illicit traffic of small arms and light weapons (SALW) to terrorism and climate change. Furthermore, the creation of the African Union (AU) in 2002 reinforced the conviction that conditions existed for the EU, despite its commitment to African ownership, to become involved in conflict management in Africa with its own capabilities.[7] Operation Artemis launched in 2003, and the setting up by the EU of a financing scheme to strengthen the AU's peace support operations capabilities, known as African Peace Facility (APF),[8] in the following year, pointed in that direction. Equally important was the approval of a European Strategy for Africa, in December 2005, which, combined with the launching of the operations EUSEC RD Congo and EUPOL Kinshasa during that same year, has clearly lent the still fledgling ESDP a more defined African élan. As this chapter will demonstrate, in the post-Lisbon Treaty context, the EU's security engagement in Africa grew even stronger considering the number of both civilian and military operations conducted under the aegis of the now designated Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).

The principal aim of this chapter is to explore and discuss the evolving relationship between the EU and Africa.[9] It argues that the EU's cooperation with Africa has incorporated a deeper security dimension and this change has enabled the EU to foster stronger security interactions with Asia. This will be made through the prism of the European engagement in the African security dynamics in the realm of CFSP and CSDP, between 2003 and 2016, a period during which these common policies have developed under the umbrella of both the ESS and the *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy*, approved in 2008.[10] Such an analytical exercise shall allow one to outline the resulting implications of the experience accumulated by the EU in African crisis management for its own developing security rapport with Asia; and to capture, in a comparative light, the differences underlying the EU's political and security role in the two continents. A focus on the EU's security profile in Africa and its bearing upon EU–Asia relations constitutes a somewhat intriguing analytical angle since the EU is a relative 'newcomer'

in the global security arena. Here, the EU cannot look back at decades of solid experience as is the case with trade and development aid. But it is rather confronted with unchartered territory, having to build many approaches and tools designed to carve out its relations with both African and Asian counterparts on a distinctive basis from scratch. Moreover, by taking the assessment of the evolving EU involvement with major African security actors and processes as a basis for understanding its resonance in changing and stronger EU–Asia security interactions, the present work makes a tangible contribution to the scholarship given the very limited existing literature which addresses this trilateral perspective while consolidating knowledge on the growing European role in the provision of security in the world.

This chapter starts by casting light on how endeavours undertaken by the EU to reach out to the world and assert itself as a global security actor have been feeding back into its relationship with both Africa and Asia. It then provides a broad thematic and historical overview of the EU–Africa relationship. At this point of the analysis, it will be outlined that the incorporation of Africa into the EU's CFSP agenda has largely taken the form of engagement in African crisis management, with security cooperation with the AU becoming of critical importance. In this regard, this chapter claims that the African experience was not without consequence for the EU's developing role in Asia, where the manifestations of a more active political and security role could be seen in both the expansion of strategic partnerships and emergent cooperation in the fight against piracy and transnational terrorism.

## The European Union in the world: reaching out to Africa and Asia

The assumption that Africa and Asia have been assigned a different place in the EU's foreign and security policy agenda seems uncontroversial. Given the colonial relations prevailing between the founding members of the European Communities and some African countries, Africa has been part of the European project since its inception, with the development of the African continent featuring in the Schuman Declaration as one of the essential tasks of the economically recovered and united post-1945 Europe.[11] Such a historical legacy would acquire great significance in, and impact upon, the quality of the EU–Africa relations throughout the decades until present times. For example, the persistence of the design of the European Development Fund, which was established by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 and targeted the former European colonies (i.e. the British, Dutch, Belgian and French), presents itself as a reflection of the influence of the colonial history on the longstanding EU–Africa relationship. Hence, relations with Africa can be said to be a key substantive area within the EC/EU's foreign policy from its early days.

In its turn, as a consequence of its geography and a history less marked by the shadow of European colonialism, Asia has traditionally remained more 'distant' from the European ambitions and achievements. Despite these differences, important commonalities – old and new – can be identified in the evolution of the EU's relationship with Africa and Asia. Traditionally speaking, these two regions of the world have been more or less associated with the EU's external assistance, especially with humanitarian and development aid-related issues. After the UK's accession to the European Communities in 1973, the organization has evolved into the second largest development provider to the Pacific area. Thus, both Africa and Asia have become important beneficiaries of the EU's development policy. Nevertheless, while Africa came to be perceived as a domain of EU 'special responsibility' and, for that reason, a foreign policy priority – something widely supported by the public opinion of its member states (Special Eurobarometer, 2010:10) – the EU's cooperation with Asia has developed in the so-called 'African shadow', that is, in the shadow of the longstanding cooperation between the EU and

Africa (Holland & Kelly, 2012:249). Furthermore, in Asia, the EU, in its condition of development aid actor, has been able to rely on cooperation with key regional players like Australia, with the 2011 Australia–EU delegated cooperation agreement for aid delivery being illustrative of this (Murray, 2016).[12]

Significantly, in recent times, these two regions have presented themselves as privileged spaces for the EU's external policy actions in the field of security, a concept understood here in broader terms. In the case of Asia, this can be readily associated with the international 'turn to Asia' promoted especially by Barack Obama's US administration. Yet, the challenges and opportunities posed over the past decade or so by China's rise were not without resonance for the political calculus made by the EU. At the same time, as anticipated in this chapter's introduction and further elaborated in the following section, European engagement in Africa's security dynamics has been a consequence of the growing number of complex threats and risks originating from the African continent.

In practical terms, all of these developments in both Africa and Asia have shown the EU the need to find creative responses in the framework of its distinctive multilateral cooperative strategy, founded on an inclusive approach to crisis management which comprised diplomatic, military, civilian, developmental and humanitarian tools. This strategy enables a differentiation between the EU and other international organizations engaged in security and peace promotion programmes, thereby giving it a comparative advantage or competitive edge. The EU's distinctiveness should be further linked to the setting up of the Framework Participation Agreement (FPA), on the basis of which a third state is allowed to participate in its crisis management operations conducted under the umbrella of the CSDP. Among the African countries which have participated in the European operations, those which stand out include Angola (EUPOL Kinshasa, EUPOL RD Congo), Mali (EUPOL Kinshasa), Morocco (EUFOR Althea) and South Africa (Artemis). As for the Asian states, participants in the CSDP missions include Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand (all of them, AMM Aceh), and New Zealand (EUFOR Althea and EUPOL Afghanistan). It is interesting to note that there is no FPA with any African country, while Australia, New Zealand and South Korea all have signed an FPA with the EU.

Such relatively recent evolution in EU–Africa and EU–Asia relations, linked to a more ambitious role in the provision of stability and security, has called for an adaptation of the EU's institutions and actors traditionally involved in cooperation with these two regions. It has also brought with it a more intense urge to get to grips with the emerging CSDP setback derived from defence cuts made by member states, particularly those affected by the crisis in the Eurozone, namely Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal (SIPRI, 2016).[13]

Against the backdrop of the EU's efforts to increase its force and weight as a foreign policy player on the global stage, both Africa and Asia became test cases for the organization to play a more active and respected role in the domains of crisis management and conflict prevention. To be sure, Africa has been a special case in point if one considers the number of European missions conducted in this continent, in the first years of ESDP, more concretely, between 2003 and 2009: 9 out of 24. This trend has remained to date as over the past five years or so, 10 out of 11 new operations were undertaken in African countries. These were the following: EUNAVFOR MED (2015), EUBAM Libya (2013), EUMAM RCA (2015), EU CAP Sahel Mali (2014), EUFOR RCA (completed, 2014–2015), EUTM Mali (2013), EU AVSEC South Sudan (completed, 2012–2014), EUCAP Sahel Niger (2012), EUCAP Nestor (2012) and EUTM Somalia (2010).

Besides the peace-support activities carried out under the aegis of CSDP, relations with Africa and Asia have been further defined by the establishment of the so-called Strategic

partnerships (SPs), a foreign policy instrument which tends to impact not only upon the growing role and influence of the EU as a global political and security player, but also upon the behaviour of third states that eventually engage in such a privileged rapport. The SPs were officially acknowledged in the framework of the 2003 ESS that has enumerated a limited number of countries with which the EU intended to strengthen a strategic relationship. Among these states are Canada, China, India, Japan, Russia and the US. In a proactive endeavour to engage further countries, the EU signed an SP with South Africa, Brazil and Mexico in 2006, 2007 and 2008, respectively. The formal existence of these partnerships was recognized in the *Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy* approved in 2008. Finally, in 2010, South Korea was added to this exclusive list, which eventually came to gather ten strategic partners. The significance of the EU's strategic partnership-based policy, whose consolidation has been receiving the political impetus of the successive High Representatives of the EU for the Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Presidents of the European Council, was made plain in the Conclusions of the European Council of September 2010 which equated the strategic partnerships with instruments at the disposal of the EU for the pursuit of its own objectives and interests (European Council, 2010:2).

Along with the signing of strategic partnerships with both established and emerging countries in Africa and Asia, the EU sealed in 2007 a strategic partnership with the African Union (AU) which stands out as a milestone in the evolutionary process of cooperation between the EU and Africa. Its major contours shall be outlined in the next section.

## European Union–Africa relations: from trade and aid cooperation to synergy towards fostering security and stability

Throughout successive decades, the collaboration between the EU and African states was largely characterized by economic and trade interests and objectives while being inextricably informed by historic and cultural links connecting former European colonial powers, particularly France, to their former colonies. After the Yaoundé Conventions were signed, with the strong support of France, the first Lomé Convention was set up in 1975 under the impetus of British membership. Throughout more than two decades (1975–2000), the Lomé Conventions (i.e. Lomé I, II, III and IV) came to be at the centre of the EU's development policy designed to promote cooperation in trade as well as financial and technical assistance. Consequently, a growing number of associated African countries came to benefit from privileged access to the European market(s) and annual STABEX *(Système de Stabilisation des Recettes d'Exportation*, a European Commission compensatory finance scheme to stabilize export earnings of the ACP countries) payments – albeit this did not take place without disadvantages; exceptions which were linked to agrarian products as well as to insufficient loans and grants.

The Lomé IV, which was negotiated in 1988/1989 against the backdrop of momentous changes sweeping the European continent, introduced an important innovation, namely an explicit political conditionality provision (Article 5) which would be expanded in 1995 to encompass respect for democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance. The tone and major principles[14] guiding a more holistic thinking on African developmental issues, combining economic development, democratization and peace, were laid out by the European Commission in its *Communication to the Council on Conflicts in Africa* produced in 1996. The latter was preceded by the 1995 EU General Affairs Council document titled *Preventive Diplomacy, Conflict Resolution and Peacekeeping in Africa*, whose conception was as a result of the Rwanda genocide that "strengthened the willingness of EU policy-makers to increase European capabilities in the field of conflict prevention and management" (Sicurelli, 2013:39).

Eventually, the *Communication to the Council on Conflicts in Africa* became the basis of the Commission's approach to the issue of violent crisis and conflict in the continent and would contribute to the shaping of the EU's role in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in African countries.[15]

Cooperation between the EU and African partners continued under the auspices of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement signed in June 2000, in the aftermath of the historic first EU–Africa Summit held in Cairo (April 2000) where the Organization of African Unity (OAU) stood out as the "African focal point" (Sheriff & Kotsopoulos, 2013:306). The Cairo declaration has managed to improve the political and security dimensions of the EU–Africa relationship, not only in inaugurating a more structured political dialogue based on regular meetings of senior officials and ministers, but also in renewing the commitment of both European and African states towards cooperation in the areas of peace building and conflict management.

As it is acknowledged, the Cotonou Agreement, concluded for a 20-year period (i.e. 2000 to 2020), has opened up a new chapter in the EU–ACP rapport (Pape, 2013:738; Carbone, 2012; Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 122–123). This chapter was marked by a quantitative increase in development aid and the conclusion of the so-called regional Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the EU and ACP partners founded on the principle of reciprocity in trade concessions and aimed at encouraging regional economic integration. It was further characterized by a comprehensive political dialogue around initiatives and strategies conceived to address conflict prevention and conflict resolution and, ultimately, to promote security and peace across African countries (Marsh & Mackenstein, 2005:231–232; Holland, 2004:277–288). Novel references to peace building and conflict prevention in the Cotonou text substantiated a natural consequence of the incorporation of development goals within the realm of CFSP, something that has bestowed the European development policy a political character as well (Holland, 2004:288). The Cotonou political *acquis* has signalled a move away from the classical exclusive focus on development assistance to an increased concern with political and security matters, notably with the promotion of democratic governance and dialogue on peace building and conflict prevention among African states (Bretherton & Vogler, 2006: 124, 126). Equally important was that as of 2003, it came to inform the EU's commitment to military and civilian action in troubled spots of Africa. The Cotonou revisions in 2005 and 2010 have only strengthened the prioritization ascribed by the EU to cooperation in areas of peace and security, something that has received negative feedback from African representatives more preoccupied with economic issues, notably with better aid arrangements and trade deals (Carbone, 2012).

In the first years of the new millennium, the gradual prioritization of security and political cooperation vis-à-vis Africa should be understood in the light of a number of geopolitical changes which ascribed African international prominence, thereby contributing to the shift in its perception from 'a charity case' to 'an opportunity' in the eyes of the EU (Sheriff & Kotsopoulos, 2013:307). The creation of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) at the OAU Summit in the summer of 2001 stands out as illustrative of this new role of Africa – one related to a more dominant role in promoting its own growth and development, whilst working against its marginalization in globalized world politics and economics. Moreover, the perceived failure of development policies and the mounting number of violent conflicts in this continent,[16] with a disruptive impact on the EU in such areas as migration, organized crime and terrorist activities, called for a proactive security approach on the part of the European states. Finally, the transformation of the OAU into the AU in 2002 represented a new turning point in EU–Africa relations in political and security terms. It imparted important signals as to the

Africans' resolve to address their own security problems through conflict prevention and crisis management mechanisms and peace-support programmes.

Yet, again, the chronic lack of financial resources and the weak operational capabilities experienced by the African states became a source of unexplored opportunities for an EU resolved to foster a respectable credible and effective role as a political and security actor on the global stage. Such determination was clearly affirmed in the ESS that has pinpointed transnational terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, state failure and organized crime as the key threats to European security. In this way, the framework document has inherently identified Africa as one of the most eligible regions for the EU's undertakings towards a more 'secure Europe' and a 'better world' under the evolving realm of ESDP. This window of opportunity to help African states, but also regional and sub-regional organizations, to carry their own burden in terms of peacekeeping and crisis management emerged when the EU had defined its security role in terms of the so-called Petersberg tasks and missions, and thus was focused on the process of building up its own military capabilities in support of "humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making", as identified in the Treaty of the European Union.[17]

The EU's engagement in African crisis management was given a concrete start with an operation codenamed Artemis, initiated in June 2003 in Bunia, in the Eastern part of DRC, upon the political impetus of the UN's Secretary-General, to prepare the ground for the subsequent launch of a reinforced MONUC mission. Despite being *de facto* almost exclusively based on French military personnel and capabilities, Artemis was *de jure* the EU's first fully autonomous military crisis management operation carried out outside Europe. Interestingly enough, while inaugurating the EU's military role in Africa, the pioneering Artemis would pave the way for other examples of innovative operations on the African soil. Operation Atalanta was the first EU's naval operation. It was launched in 2008 in the Gulf of Aden and in the Indian Ocean, and aimed to deter piracy and support the vessels of the World Food Programme. This has led some to consider, rightly, this continent a field for the experimentation or a 'test-bed' of the CSDP (Whitman & Haastrup, 2013:58).[18]

Overall, the CSDP missions in Africa have been launched in response to requests from the UN and deployed until the latter's contingents could take over. Their mandates have been specific in character and their tangible impact on African conflict management limited (Rye, 2013:36, 39; Gegout, 2007). Most European operations have been civilian in nature and some have been conducted in cooperation with the AU. In the case of military operations, the leading roles were played by France, and to a lesser extent by the UK and Germany, and whenever they were based on short-term mandates, circumscribed in geographical terms, with low risk of casualties, and judged as critical to signal the EU's capacity to act independently from the US, principally on the African ground (Gegout, 2007). In sum, CSDP missions have clearly demonstrated the shortcomings of European capabilities and revealed major difficulties for the European multinational forces, not only in going beyond low-level peacekeeping and civilian crisis management, but also in transcending the function of bridging operations to facilitate UN interventions (Griffin, 2007:42) as well as the task of assisting the AU with the management of on-going conflicts. Incidentally, these shortcomings and difficulties have raised criticism among AU leaders, with the CFSP outcomes being criticized for their limited effectiveness and inconsistency (Sicurelli, 2009:186–189). Nevertheless, the expeditionary operations have helped the EU to enhance its role in African security affairs, notably vis-à-vis the US, while retaining its image as a "model of achieving and maintaining peace" (ibid.: 186) in the eyes of African leaders, and to strengthen its external perception as a global political actor capable of making a concrete contribution to international peace and security.

The EU–AU cooperation in the domain of crisis management became particularly noticeable in the establishment of the APF in April 2004. The latter was launched at the request of the AU, conveying €300 million from the European Development Fund to support African peacekeeping operations.[19] The EU's financial support has facilitated two AU operations (AMIS I and AMIS II) in Darfur (Sudan), as well as missions in Burundi, the Central African Republic and the Comoros. More generally, the EU–AU relationship has been based upon a "clear division of labour: the African Union deploys troops and the EU supplies economic resources and advice in support of the troops, disarmament and general elections" (Rye, 2013:49). The EU has, thus, emerged as the sponsor of or "funder" in the EU–AU relationship (ibid.). And this has been subject to criticism for engendering a kind of "outsourcing" of the EU's security (Gowan & Witney, 2014:1) and for its subsequent negative impact upon both the reinforcement of the AU and the international standing of the EU itself (Gowan & Witney, 2014; Mackinda et al., 2016:122).

At the same time, the EU's collaboration with the AU has been increasingly oriented towards local military and civilian capacity building (Tardy, 2015:3). To this end, support has been provided in terms of training, technical assistance and funding of the AU's personnel. The General Secretariat of the Council of the EU has been contributing to the development of concepts for police, rule of law and civilian administration, along with the contribution to the doctrine and standing operating procedures of the African Standby Force (Boin et al., 2013:71). To foster local security capabilities has been indeed an integral part of all recent CSDP operations in Africa. Examples of this can be seen in the training of Somalian recruits on behalf of AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia) in the framework of EUTM Somalia, the strengthening of maritime capabilities in the Horn of Africa under the umbrella of EUCAP Nestor, and the reform and strengthening of the Malian national army in the context of EUTM Mali. This growing tendency reflects the idea of the African states' ownership and leadership of their own security policies. It also resonates with the EU's comprehensive approach to crisis management as well as with its security–development nexus narrative, according to which, underdevelopment leads to violence and insecurity precludes development (Franke, 2009:69).

Despite this, the European approach to capacity building in Africa has been exhibiting both contextual and material limitations, as testified by the post-2008 landscape. Indicative of this is the focus on smaller and cheaper capacity building which has sprung from a certain CSDP "missions fatigue" (Mattelaer & Marijnen, 2014:58), and was aggravated by the economic difficulties afflicting the EU and, particularly, the Eurozone. Further limitations are also related to the narrow scope of some of the associated EU financing instruments (Tardy, 2015:2).[20] Moreover, the EU has been stipulating specific restrictions such as the non-provision of lethal equipment, based on the assumption that newly developed capabilities may not be used as originally planned, as demonstrated by the Guinea-Bissau coup d'état[21] (2012) following the security sector reform mission (EUSSR Guinea-Bissau) launched in 2008 (Tardy, 2015:2). Be that as it may, as asserted by some like Mattelaer & Marijnen (2014:67), the EU's indirect engagement in African capacity building has been the only one both "within the material reach of European states" and "within political reach in terms of finding consensus". Moreover, it has been allowing the EU to maintain an "affordable influence" in Africa while pursuing its aspiration to shape the broad dynamics in the African strategic environment (Mattelaer & Marijnen, 2014:67).

While acknowledging that, as some put it aptly, none of the EU's military missions have solved the African conflicts (Gegout, 2007:131), it can be said that the evolution of the security dimension underlying the EU–Africa relationship has been more or less commensurate with African requests and expectations of cooperation with the EU. It has also been in line with the EU's manifest ambition to enhance its visibility and political leverage under the umbrella of

both the CFSP and CSDP by means of a growing role and presence in international peacekeeping and crisis management, alongside other key international organizations like the UN and NATO. The provision of security in Africa has been of particular relevance to the EU in retaining its influence in view of mounting competition of interests arising not only from US increased geo-strategic and military interests in the region, as revealed by the creation of a new US military command for Africa (i.e. the US Africa Command or AFRICOM),[22] but also from the remarkable Chinese economic and trade presence in various African countries, within which it came to challenge the EU's external role, also in the security sphere.[23]

In view of Africa's rising strategic importance, which became particularly evident with the continent's international momentum in 2005 – designated the 'Year of Africa'[24] – the EU–Africa dialogue has intensified. This was demonstrated by the establishment of a strategic partnership with Africa in the framework of the second EU–Africa Summit which took place in Lisbon, on 8–9 December 2007. By then, 80 African statesmen and European leaders formally endorsed the Africa–EU Strategic Partnership, which included a Joint Africa–EU Strategy and an Action Plan for its implementation. While signalling the purpose, on the part of the EU, to foster a more coherent foreign policy for the African continent (Carbone, 2012), the Africa–EU Strategic Partnership conveyed a paradigm shift in the relationship between the two actors: the previous joint strategy for Africa was due to be replaced by a European strategy with Africa based on a "partnership between equals". The principal aspiration was that a "joint responsibility" and "joint ownership" became the cornerstone of this rapport while moving it beyond the immediate postcolonial focus on aid and trade (Sheriff & Kotsopoulos, 2013:305). In more concrete terms, under the Joint Africa–EU Strategy, a renewed and more intensive political dialogue was initiated. Symptomatic of this were the circumstances in which EU–Africa relations came to include triennial heads of government summits and a reinforced parliamentary dimension, with both the European Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament getting involved in the creation of a joint progress report on the implementation of the Strategy and its Action Plans, in their condition of actors expected to play 'crucial roles' in the EU–Africa dialogue and summitry (Kingah & Cofelice, 2015:149).

Significantly, the Africa–EU Strategic Partnership corresponded to the follow up of the EU's Strategy for Africa, adopted in December 2005, which was originally enshrined in the *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee of 12 October 2005, EU Strategy for Africa: Towards a Euro-African Pact to Accelerate Africa's Development*. This strategy delineated the steps which the EU intended to undertake, until 2015, to support African efforts towards democratic stability, sustainable development and security. Under its umbrella, EU–Africa cooperation came to target new areas, notably cooperation in the fight against terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and mercenary activities (Sicurelli, 2013). All this indicates the extension of the EU's foreign policy profile, which becomes further noticeable when casting a comparative light upon the operation of the EU in the Asian continent.

## The operation of the European Union in Africa and Asia: a comparative perspective

As we have already discussed, Africa and Asia have become more important in the security sphere during the past decade or so, as reflected in the incremental expansion and institutionalization of the EU's relations with these regions. That said, it seems clear that each poses different constraints and challenges, thereby putting to the test the EU's ability to assert itself as a respected international foreign policy and security player.

During recent years, the EU's capacity to provide security in Africa, as well as the coherence of its external role, has been under enormous strain. This is so not only because the EU has been grappling with a volatile political and military environment still imbued with legacies of the past, but also the necessity in dealing with multidimensional security threats, such as those emanating from the refugee crisis, conflicts in Central Africa, civil war and jihadist-dominated rebellions in Mali, and the activities of groups like Boko Haram and ISIS. Thus, it does not come as a surprise to see Africa as the geographical focus of CDSP missions, despite the fact that their scope is widely referred to as "spanning the Western Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East, Asia and Africa" (Bremberg, 2015:68).

As far as EU–Asia relations are concerned, the increasing emphasis placed upon the security sphere is due to the EU's apprehension regarding the growing international relevance of the region. As a result, there was also the necessity to find a response to the widespread criticism regarding its lack of strategic vision for Asia (Bersik, 2014:285). Such criticism, which gained further salience in the context of the 'Asian turn', coincided with the crisis in the Eurozone and, in more general terms, with the EU's perceived international "delivery deficit" (Smith, 2013:115). Eventually, the recognition by the EU of the region's critical importance, not only in political, economic, trade, but also in security terms, was revealed in the formulation and implementation of the *Guidelines on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy in East Asia* as well as in the incremental expansion of its strategic partnership policy.[25] The EU has acknowledged the existence of five individual strategic partners in Asia, namely China, Russia, India, Japan and South Korea, something which stands in marked contrast with the recognition of only one in Africa, which is South Africa (Ferreira-Pereira & Vieira, 2016).

Equally important, the security dynamics underlying the EU–Asia relationship came to encompass the conduct of, albeit few, CSDP missions, notably the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) in Indonesia, launched in 2005, and the EU Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL Afghanistan), undertaken two years later. What is more, it came to be marked by cooperation in the domains of anti-terrorism and anti-piracy. Incidentally, the EU's concerns with the maritime security within the CSDP purview have led to unprecedented collaboration with Asian countries. In the framework of Operation Atalanta, joint naval anti-piracy training has been conducted with the Chinese, Japanese and South Korean naval forces in the Indian Ocean. After the launching of that operation, the EU has become more actively involved in maritime security in the Western Indian Ocean. An illustrative example of this can be seen in the launching of the Critical Maritime Routes Programme (CMR) established in 2009, which aims to improve maritime governance by enhancing information sharing and the training of maritime law enforcement, with special emphasis being placed on coastal guards. Further instances of the EU's engagement in the region comprise a €37 million investment into the Regional Maritime Security Programme (MASE) which started in 2013, and the Critical Maritime Routes in the Indian Ocean (CRIMARIO), launched in 2015 to support the maritime situation awareness.[26] In that sense, one can say that the evolution of the naval component of the CSDP, which was inaugurated in Africa with Operation Atalanta, has created a space for a greater European role in the provision of maritime security in the Indian Ocean. By taking stock of its various experiences, the EU can also develop, henceforth, into a motor for cooperative security governance dynamics within this crucial area which links Africa to Asia.

Despite many shortcomings and drawbacks prevailing at the level of CFSP/CSDP, the EU has been emerging in the African continent as an increasingly committed security provider by taking the lead in diverse crisis management missions and supporting the AU's capacity-building efforts, particularly through the funding of its conflict prevention, management and resolution

activities. Along these lines, the evolution of the EU's security and military role in Africa enables the EU to present itself as a more credible political and strategic actor on the Asian continent, where it has been attempting to meet some countries' concerns with maritime security governance. In that sense, there are conditions for a stronger EU–Asia collaboration in the domain of maritime security.

Be that as it may, in the eyes of the Asian elites, the intensification of the security cooperation underpinning the relationship between the EU and Asia does not outweigh what is considered to be the EU major weakness, which is the "non-existent military capabilities in the region and an underdeveloped CFSP" (Bersik, 2014:119).[27] Moreover, particularly in East Asia, the EU has been depicted as being among the "free-riders that rely on the US military posture in Asia-Pacific" (ibid.: 122). The fact that the EU has been framing its strategy vis-à-vis Asia in cooperation and coordination with the US gave rise to the perception that in East Asia the EU seconds the US path in terms of its general conduct and major specific interests in the area. This was exemplified by the joint statement on developments in Asia-Pacific set forth by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, and the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, on the occasion of the 2012 ASEAN Regional Forum forum (Bersik, 2014:162). The perceived free-rider image of the EU has been mitigated by its emphasis on the importance of international law as the most appropriate guide for and response to a more assertive and aggressive China, when it comes to its sovereignty claims in the South China Sea and to the ensuing territorial and maritime disputes against other Southeast Asian states.[28] In this regard, it is worth noting that the EU's defence of international law has reinforced conditions for some ASEAN countries like Vietnam to develop a hedging-oriented foreign policy (Tran et al., 2013) informed by a 'third way'-type politico-diplomatic stance enabling the country not only to safeguard its own strategic interests, but also to feel free from the necessity of choosing between 'balancing' (i.e. supporting the US strategy) and 'bandwagoning' (i.e. giving in to China's interests).[29]

As already advanced above, both in Africa and Asia, the EU has been facing fierce competition from other extra-regional powers. In the case of Asia, it is worth noting that apart from the US, the influence of Russia, and also of Brazil, has become an even greater challenge. As for the African continent, the weight of China in economic, trade and security spheres has been steadily growing, thereby challenging clearly the traditional predominant role of the EU as the main extra-regional actor. The lack of a systematic US African policy tends to make the Chinese presence and leverage in Africa even more pronounced. Although China has been standing out as *primus inter pares* among external actors operating in Africa, the engagement of Brazil in the region should be borne in mind. This was particularly noticeable during the Lula da Silva administration and continues to produce its effects (Ferreira-Pereira, 2016).

A common basis governing the EU's relationship with these two regions of the world is linked to the key role of intraregional and interregional organizations, which has been seen as a precondition for the stability of both the regional and international order. This is especially the case with EU–Asia relations, in the context of which the regional integration builds upon strong institutional structures like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The EU supports the regional integration process in Asia by acting as a major development partner of ASEAN and the biggest donor of the ASEAN Secretariat. Here, again, given the growing number of common security concerns "ranging from border management and transnational crime to radicalisation, illegal migration, and climate change and cyber security" (Pejsova, 2016:2), EU–ASEAN cooperation has been reinforced in 2012, after the EU's accession to the *Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia*. In 2015, the EU appointed its

first Ambassador to ASEAN, Francisco Fontan Pardo, and established a mission in Jakarta to enhance the bilateral relationship (ibid.:1).

Overall, the EU welcomes the furtherance of its collaborative action interregionally and multilaterally fora in both regions. Such significance ascribed by the EU to the interregional dialogue is underpinned by the putative assumption that the European integration experience can inspire the region-building processes in Africa and Asia, like those substantiated by the African Union and ASEAN. One can say, nonetheless, that the perception of the EU as a 'model' for regional integration has been seriously eroded by a state of continued political, economic and social crisis it finds itself in since the beginning of the global financial crisis of 2008 – a scenario which was particularly difficult under the recent refugee emergency crisis and terrorist attacks at the very heart of Europe.

## Conclusion

This chapter has sought to provide a critical analysis of the evolving nature of the EU–Africa relationship, while addressing some of its major implications for developing European relations with Asia. In this regard, the emphasis has been placed upon the EU's changing role in the provision of security in African and Asian continents under the aegis of CFSP activities, which include the CSDP missions.

The evolution of EU–Africa relations outlined by this chapter has demonstrated the extension of the EU's external role from limited trade- and aid-based programmes mainly targeting the ACP group of countries to the current position, whereby the EU has the ability to advance a political and security agenda at both bilateral and multilateral level, as part of its CFSP and CSDP objectives. Representative of the progress is the expressive number of CSDP police and military missions carried out since 2003 to date, which shows that the African continent has been consigned the category of a regional laboratory for the EU's endeavours in building its political and security influence on the international stage, in general, and its status as a security provider in Africa, in particular.

As we have argued here, the African crisis management experience was not without resonance for the EU's developing security role in Asia. This is so to the extent that the EU has attempted to capitalize on the dividends gained on the African ground to improve its political and security visibility and leverage in Asia. Although in this continent the EU continues to be seen as a security 'free rider' and a weak military power, there have been positive developments in EU–Asia security interactions. These encompass the extension of the EU's partnership policy. Furthermore, the participation of ASEAN countries in the first CDSP missions in Asia, namely AMM Aceh and EUPOL Afghanistan, the joint naval training in the framework of the first European naval mission, Operation Atalanta, and the establishment of framework FPAs with key Asian actors, all point in that direction. Such recent developments have helped the EU to present itself as a more credible security actor in Asia, where it has been seizing opportunities linked to Asian states' concerns with maritime security. The unprecedented committed and active role of the EU in the security management and governance of the Indian Ocean is a particular case in point, which may well create/favour conditions for the EU to evolve into a security bridge builder between Africa and Asia.

Overall, the examination of the principal political dynamics and security manifestations underpinning the EU's interactions with the two regions provided by this chapter has also shown how this organization has been tackling complex security challenges and seizing a variety of opportunities to promote itself as a capable international actor in world affairs while competing for political and strategic influence vis-à-vis other powers interested in Africa and Asia, such as China, the US and Russia.

Considering that many issues and developments brought into the scope of this chapter are recent and still unfolding, the trilateral perspective adopted here to scrutinize EU–Africa and EU–Asia security relations calls for further academic enquiry. This opens up new avenues for future research that should further unravel, substantiate and appraise the extent to which, and the ways in which, a more assertive EU security role in Africa is leveraging more visible, active and stronger EU–Asia security interactions, and the consequences of this 'trilateralization' dynamics in the (re)definition of the EU's political, security and strategic interests in Africa and Asia.

## Notes

1 For a detailed account of the EU's partnership policy towards Brazil and Russia, see Vieira (2016) and Laura C. Ferreira-Pereira (2016).

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

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

4 The first Lomé Convention, set up in 1975 between the then 9 member states of the EEC and 46 ACP countries, is generally considered as marking the beginning of the *de facto* EEC's Development Policy. After Lomé I being in force between 1976 and 1980, Lomé II became operational between 1981 and 1985. Lomé III governed the relations between 1985 and 1990, and Lomé IV, which came to comprise 70 ACP partners, was in force between 1990 and 1999.

5 This contribution does not bring the EU's relations with North Africa into the analysis. This is because North Africa has been ascribed a differentiated treatment by the EU, not only as part of the latter's Mediterranean approach (substantiated in both the Union for Mediterranean, launched in July 2008, and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership established in 1995), but also in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Thus, treating both regions separately has become "academic convention" (Hurt, 2004: 155).

6 The Barcelona Process was launched in November 1995 by 15 EU member states and 12 partners, namely Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey. The EU enlargement, as well as the accession of Albania and Mauritania to the Barcelona Process in 2007, resulted in a larger membership (27+10). The Union for the Mediterranean is composed of 28 EU member states, the European Commission, the Arab League and 15 countries, notably Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Syria (suspended), Tunisia and Turkey.

7 This was clearly put forward in the Common Position on conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa adopted in January 2004. See Council Common Position 2004/85/CFSP of 26 January 2004 concerning conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa and repealing Common Position 2001/374/CFSP, Official Journal of the European Union, 28.1.2004, available at http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32004E0085&from=EN

8 The money allocated to the PFA comes from the European Development Fund under the Cotonou Agreement.

9 This chapter does not aim to analyse individual foreign policies of the major EU member states vis-à-vis Africa and Asia. Nor does it intend to examine their national perspectives or national inputs into both EU–Africa and EU–Asia relations. For an analysis of the individual member states' approaches and initiatives, see contributions by Julia Gallagher, Ian Taylor and Ulf Engel (Gallagher, 2009; Taylor, 2012; Engel, 2000).

10 The High Representative Federica Mogherini presented a new strategic framework document titled 'EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy' at the EU summit held in Brussels on 28 June 2016. This occurred five days after the EU referendum in the United Kingdom. When the writing of this chapter was concluded all these developments had not taken place as yet. Hence they fall outside the remit of the analysis presented herein.

11 According to the Schuman Declaration of 9 May 1950: "The solidarity in [coal and steel] production thus established will make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely

unthinkable, but materially impossible. This production will be offered to the world as a whole without distinction or exception, with the aim of contributing to raising living standards and to promoting peaceful achievements. With increased resources *Europe will be able to pursue the achievement of one of its essential tasks, namely, the development of the African continent*" (Authors' emphasis).

12 The agreement allowed for the delivery of food security assistance by the EU on Australia's behalf to South Sudan, as well as for the delivery of a component of the EU's assistance by Australia to Fiji.

13 For details, see Hensel (2016).

14 The four major principles were the following: principle of ownership, principle of prevention, principle of early warning and principle of coherence.

15 The European policy towards conflict prevention in Africa was somewhat streamlined in the framework of the *Commission Communication of 2001 on Conflict Prevention and the EU Programme on the Prevention of Violent Conflicts*, adopted at the Gothenburg Council of June 2001.

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

17 The Petersberg tasks were originally integrated in the Treaty of Amsterdam which entered into force on 1 May 1999; they were then replicated in the subsequent (revised) European Treaties to date.

18 For more details, see Bagoyoko & Gilbert (2009).

19 Eventually, the EU established a more visible presence in Addis Ababa, the location of the African Union headquarters, through the nomination of the EU SR to the AU and a larger diplomatic team. The AU also has an embassy in Brussels and an ambassador accredited to the EU.

20 For instance, the legal basis for the Development Cooperation Instrument explicitly rules out the procurement of arms or ammunition, as well as support of military operations in more general terms. The APF, which is financed from the European Development Fund, has been used to fund AU-led military operations, but such critical items as ammunition, arms, military equipment, salaries for soldiers and military training for soldiers are non-eligible for the funding under the APF. An overview of EU instruments, legal provisions and their implications is presented by Tardy (2015:2).

21 The coup d'état was materialized in April 2012 by elements of the armed forces before the second round of a presidential election between Carlos Gomes Júnior and Kumba Ialá.

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

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

24 Symptomatic of this international momentum was also the establishment of the UN Office of the Special Advisor on Africa in 2003 and the creation of the Commission for Africa to provide impetus for the development of the continent, an objective which was subsequently taken up by the G8 in Gleneagles. See www.commissionforafrica.info [Accessed 04 April 2016].

25 These were preceded by the *EU East Asia Policy Guidelines*, established in 2007, whose revision by the European Council in 2012 paved the way for the adoption of *Guidelines on the EU's Foreign and Security Policy in East Asia* (Council of the European Union, 2012).

26 A summary of the EU efforts to support regional maritime capabilities is available at http://eeas.europa.eu/piracy/regional_maritime_capacities_en.htm [Accessed 7 April 2016]. See also Pejsova (2016).

27 For more on this matter, see also Stumbaum (2015: 138). Drawing on the results of analysis of 210 interviews of Asian elites in 20 Asia-Pacific locations (corresponding to six countries, namely India, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines), Chaban et al. (2015:238) demonstrate that the EU is generally perceived as an economic power, with the military dimension playing a limited role. Only three countries (Singapore, Thailand and Philippines) attributed some importance to the EU as an international military power, while India was the most critical of the EU's military capabilities.

28 This is not to say that, to date, the EU has been able to produce a well-defined collective response to China's more aggressive posture.

29 In contrast to the US, the EU is a party to the United Nation Convention of the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

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