A STRATEGY IN SEARCH OF TWO CONTINENTS: THE EU AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

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The turn of the year 2010/11 saw not only the inauguration of the new European External Action Service, (EEAS) but also the holding of the 3rd EU Africa Summit, in Tripoli on 29-30 November 2010. It is therefore an appropriate moment to take stock of both progress and failures in this relationship, and to ask whether the new institutional arrangements in Europe are likely to enhance the first and reduce the second.

Rather than provide a detailed account of the new EAS, or of the complex bureaucratic structures which dominate the existing arrangements for EU-Africa cooperation (both of which are easily found elsewhere)[2] it seems more useful to try to summarise the chequered history of cooperation to date, and to try to account for why this cooperation has been so problematic. I argue that policy towards Africa, in itself, has never been a central concern of European foreign and security (and subsequently defence) policy, but rather, so-called African policy has functioned as a card to be played in various internal debates, a theatre for trying out new ideas, and a surrogate for more important debates and struggles taking place elsewhere. As a result, EU Africa policy has often been a reflection of other policies, a mix of generally incompatible national objectives, and an aspect of Europe's increasing desire to make a place for itself in the world.

For this reason, the history of EU security policy in Africa has been one of fits and starts, and has been disproportionately dominated by the former colonial powers on one hand, and the major donors on the other, with their different and mutually inconsistent objectives. Unlike the relationships with Russia or the United States, which necessarily impose themselves on Europe, and where history, economics and geography determine much of what their content will be, the nature of the relationship with Africa is not obvious. Indeed, it is not even clear whether "a" single relationship with Africa is what is wanted or needed, or even whether the concept itself is a useful one. Moreover, the possibility of an improvement in the relationship obviously depends upon the nature of the difficulties experienced so far. If they are essentially technical (the results, for example, of inadequate structures or lack of political attention) then in principle they might be resolved, at least in part, by the arrival of the new EAS. I argue, however, that the problems of the relationship between Europe (however defined) and Africa (however defined) are fundamental, structural and historical, and so not easily remedied in the short or medium term. Better coordination is never a bad idea, but coordination is a bureaucratic activity, which cannot compensate for fundamental underlying differences of view. I conclude that the problems have arisen from very basic problems and divergences, within Europe, within Africa, and between the two, and that these are unlikely to be resolved quickly I conclude by asking whether there are there any less ambitious, but more successful examples of Europe-Africa cooperation which could serve as models.

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[2] For the EAS see its home page at http://www.eeas.europa.eu/ There is an official EU-Africa internet site at www.africa-eu-partnership.org. See also Elizabeth Drieksen and Louise van Shaik, (eds) *The European External Action Service : Preparing for Success*. Full references to documents and articles cited can be found in the bibliography

I therefore briefly review the genesis of the CFSP and ESDP, and explain how, quite late on, they were applied to Africa, and why. I look at the complexities of trying to establish and manage such a relationship, the very different perceptions of Africa among major European players, and the difficulty that Africans have had in understanding Europe. EU security policy towards Africa is impossible to understand without taking Europe's own history into account, not least because the very special circumstances that led to European integration have not been repeated elsewhere, and, whilst the AU imitates many of the EU's forms, it does so in a completely different historical and political context. Therein lies a good part of the problem. I discuss the different historical dynamics which compete among themselves to define the European approach, and finally touch on the insoluble problems of two very unequal institutions, and continents, trying to create a partnership of equals.

SO FAR, SO EQUIVOCAL

The idea of a wider, structured EU-Africa relationship, to include security, is generally held to begin with the first Heads of State Summit in Cairo, in April 2000, which concluded that a new, post Cold-War, post-colonial, multilateral relationship was needed between the two continents. But of course the EU (and the EC) had had more limited relations with Africa for some time. In particular, the four Lomé Conventions (1976-1989) were designed to offer free access for agricultural and mineral products to enter Europe, and for development aid from the European Development Fund (part of the original 1957 Treaty of Rome apparatus). They also provided for investment from the European Investment Bank, and compensation for fluctuations in commodity prices. The Lomé Conventions were effectively torpedoed by the United States (which formally complained to the World Trade Organisation in 1995) and were replaced by the Cotonou Agreement, signed in 2000, which is more ambitious and wide-ranging, and includes "governance" and human rights as well as trade issues.

The Lomé agreements, although attracting some criticism, can be defended as relatively limited, coherent and mostly successful. They were concluded with the former British, French and Belgian colonies in Africa (and also several countries in the Pacific and Caribbean) with the specific intention of encouraging trade, and development, and of swapping money (which Europe had) for raw materials (which they often lacked). In an age of growth and prosperity, moreover, allowing agricultural imports into the EC did not seem a problem. But by the time of the Cotonou Agreement, the beginnings of a tendency to all-inclusive gigantism were already noticeable. There was, however, no mention of security in these documents. The Lomé Convention was signed during the Cold War, when Africa was a convenient theatre for ideological struggles, and where shifting coalitions of western states supported different countries and armed groups to different degrees. It was not until the late 1990s, for reasons that will be explained later, that EU security cooperation in Africa became feasible.

The 2000 Cairo Summit adopted a powerful declaration and an ambitious Action Plan, which included peace building and conflict prevention, in addition to the continuing historic Lomé agendas of trade and development. Progress was slow, however, and it was not until 2007 that the next Summit meeting took place, in Lisbon. In that period, the EU had expanded its membership, and the ambitious and complex structure of the African Union had replaced the original Organisation of African Unity. The EU had developed a wide-ranging Strategy for Africa, agreed in 2005, which promised a "quantum leap" in the relationship, to be based on strengthening of the traditional policies of "equality, partnership and ownership" It also acknowledged what was increasingly clear, that there was too much fragmentation, "both in policy formulation and implementation: between the different policies and actions of EU Member States and the European Commission; between trade cooperation and economic development cooperation; between more traditional socio-economic development efforts and strategic political policies". The Strategy was intended to address these weaknesses, among others, and to "give the EU a comprehensive, integrated and long-term framework for its relations

with the African continent." For the first time also, the EU promised to treat Africa as "one entity" given that the African integration process was under way.[3]

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, many of the ideas, and much of the language, of the Strategy appeared two years later in the December 2007 Lisbon Declaration, and the ambitious Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) which accompanied it. Arguing that Africa and Europe were bound together by "a community of values" the JAES proposed a "new and stronger partnership" based on "a Euro-African consensus on values, common interests and common strategic objectives" This partnership was to address not only traditional issues between the two continents, but also bilateral cooperation on global issues of common concern. Peace and security was one of the four main objectives in the partnership, but this time not in Africa alone: cooperation in the Middle East was specifically envisaged. Above all, the partnership was intended to overcome "the traditional donor-recipient relationship".[4]

Three years later, and in anticipation of the November 2010 Tripoli Summit, the Joint AUC-EU Task Force reviewed progress. It noted that although "some steady progress" had been made in implementing the JAES, what it diplomatically described as "some challenges" were still being encountered. Nonetheless, it argued, these challenges could be overcome through "enhanced political dialogue and coordination, strengthened institutional architecture and working arrangements, as well as through dialogue on financing mechanisms." There were, in other words, no fundamental incompatibilities at the political level, the remaining difficulties were essentially technical. [5] In the event, the Third Africa-EU Summit in Tripoli produced a Declaration largely recycling existing ideas. There was, once more, a commitment to "making the African Peace and Security Architecture fully operational" and to "work towards" sustainable funding for peace operations. The JAES was "confirmed" as a framework for cooperation. Yet in the margins, both sides expressed doubts. The Europeans were worried about Chinese penetration into the continent, whereas the AU Chair, Jean Ping, noted, perhaps ominously, that, whilst Europe was still important, "Africa has already begun to diversify its strategic partners".[6]

From the beginning "Peace and Security" sometimes including "crisis management" has been a theme of this partnership, as it has been, in different ways, in contacts between individual European states and Africa since independence. In recent years, this has largely amounted to European support for the African Peace and Security Architecture, the far-reaching and complex structure put in place as part of the African Union apparatus, and largely based on the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The operational arm of the APSA, the African Standby Force, organised around brigade-sized forces for each REC, was intended to be operational by 2010, but this has not happened. Indeed, one African expert has recently assessed that "it is only in the medium to long term that the ASF will be in a position to implement the full scale of its mandate as spelled out in the PSC Protocol. In the short term, its role in and capability and contribution towards effective conflict management and resolution will be modest."[7] This is in spite of considerable practical and financial support from the European Union. The Joint Task Force itself noted that in spite of some progress " much remains to be done in order to sustain and consolidate this progress and to achieve a functional Architecture including smooth and effective interaction between all components of the APSA."

The question, therefore, is why progress has not been faster, and whether indeed the "functional architecture" which is sought is actually practicable, even with continued help and financing from the EU. The rest of this paper considers these questions. First, though, it is important to be realistic about what can be achieved in an enterprise of this kind, and at what speed. To say that effective EU-African cooperation in peace and security has been slow in coming is not necessarily a

[3] *EU Strategy for Africa {*SEC(2005)1255}, October 2005.
[4] Both texts are available at http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/documents
[5] Report of the 11th Meeting of the Joint AUC-EC Task Force, 20-21 October 2010 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Available at http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/3rd-africa-eu-summit
[6] "Europe and Africa: a partnership of equals?" *The Guardian,* 3 December 2010.
[7] Dersso, *The Role and Place of the African Standby Force,* p.18.

criticism. The fact is that international relations are difficult to do. Bilateral relations between two countries of any size are complex enough. Several countries trying to develop and implement a common policy towards another country is an order of magnitude more difficult, given different experiences, interests and perceptions. For two groups of countries to have effective group-to-group relationships with each other is more difficult still. Numbers are also a factor, since as numbers of states increase arithmetically, the complexity of the possible relationships increases geometrically. So with 53 very varied African states, and 27 very varied European states, things are inevitably going to be difficult. It is no real criticism to say that progress has been patchy, and that many of the achievements and "deliverables" have been meetings, seminars and training courses.

In reality, the situation is both less and more complicated than the simple numbers might suggest. Less complicated, because not all players are equal. Some European states have little interest in Africa, very limited representation there, and little aspiration to influence EU Africa policy. The same is true in reverse of a number of African states, which have limited overseas representation, and seldom play much a role in REC or AU debates. In practice, and as is the case in virtually every international organisation, a small number of states in each organisation make most of the running. In turn, EU states are massively better resourced, and Brussels and a few of the European national capitals take on most of the actual work. Whilst this system increases efficiency (anything else would be unmanageable) it also marginalises many states who would like to contribute, but do not have the means.

The situation is also more complicated than described because the EU/AU relationship is not the only one, for either side. As we shall see, bilateral relations persist, ad hoc groupings talk to each other, some European and some African nations are members of groups like the G-20 or the Security Council, and both new and existing non-EU actors have to be taken account of. In addition, Africa has a complex of national and economic groupings, not only within the AU, but also regionally based, like the Mano River Union, and the Maghreb Arab Union, and extending beyond Africa, like the Organisation of the Islamic Conference.

FROM THE URALS TO THE ATLANTIC

The pillar structure of the EU, especially in the defence and security area, is recognised to be a weakness, as well as a source of confusion to Africans and others. But it is not a system which arose accidentally or as a result of error: it was, and remains, a product of the very complicated and messy internal politics of Europe on what the French call "regalian" issues – those that go to the heart of the sovereignty of a state. This was reflected in the fact that trade and development issues relating to Africa continued to be dealt with by the Commission (and of course bilaterally) whereas any political and security issues would in theory have been dealt with inter-governmentally. This already rather artificial distinction was complicated further by the many overlapping bilateral relations between European states and African states, covering both sets of issues, and the fact that foreign and security policy subjects were not automatically included under CFSP, but had to be agreed by all as suitable ingredients In the early days of CFSP there was little enthusiasm for including African subjects in the debate. The fact that the new High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy is also Vice President of the European Commission, and that it is anticipated that the majority of EAS's staff will come from the Commission and the Council Secretariat, may go some way to smooth the operation of the system, but the fundamental problem will remain as long as the underlying tensions do. To understand these tensions, we need to trace very briefly the evolution of thinking about European security, which has gone from internal peace, through defence against external threats to an attempt to stabilise other regions of the world, including Africa.

A common foreign policy, let alone one involving security and defence as well, is difficult without a common identity, and a common set of values and interests. In practice, it required collective political cohesion for Europe, which was slow to develop. Although ideas for European Unions appeared soon after the First World War, they were generally over-ambitious, and were

derailed by the nationalist politics of the era, as well as the impossibility of solving the historic Franco-German contest for supremacy by peaceful means.[8] It was only when contemplating the wreckage of what was left of Europe that political élites began to realise that they would have no choice this time. And as well as the fear of the direct consequences of another war, there was the equal, and greater, fear of Communism. Anti-communism was not a new factor in European politics, and had, indeed, been a major complication in the unsuccessful attempts to find a solution to the rise of Hitler. A number of major European figures went so far as to argue that Europe should unite, on behalf of traditional Christian values, behind German leadership, against the Communist menace.[9] Collaboration with the German invader after 1940 followed easily enough, and so did actual military assistance. Several million non-Germans from at least twenty nations served under the swastika, especially on the Russian Front. At least 350,000 foreign volunteers fought in the *Waffen SS,* or about half of its entire strength.[10] Ironically, therefore, the first reasonably coherent European security policy, and advertised as such at the time, was a war of extermination against the Soviet Union.

The post-war discrediting of the political and military leaders who had collaborated (though most returned to power in the 1950s), and the domination of the Resistance in all European countries by the forces of the Left, produced a marked political swerve to the left in the late 1940s, with the real possibility of Communist-led governments being elected in France and Italy. In 1948, the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, suggested a "spiritual union of the West" to counter this threat, and began a process which led to the 1949 Washington Treaty.[11] At this stage, the existing 1948 Treaty of Brussels was intended to provide protection against a resurgent Germany, and there was no thought of German rearmament. All this changed with the panic brought on by the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 and the assumption that an attack on the West was imminent. Under American pressure, the fledgling Western Union Defence Organisation was rapidly absorbed into the new NATO, and the massive remilitarisation of Western Europe began. Generating sufficient troops would have required the rearmament of Germany, which was enthusiastically supported by the US, but unacceptable to Europeans. The compromise, based on an idea originally proposed by France, was the European Defence Community, in which a single European Army, with no national contingents above battalion level, would be commanded by an American General. This would, it was hoped, allow Germany to be controlled. A much-modified plan was agreed in 1952, but never implemented. The US eventually forced through German rearmament and membership of NATO, in 1955.

The failure of the EDC, the militarisation of NATO and the rearmament of Germany effectively put an end to a concept of European Defence against external threats, which in any case was far too ambitious given the times. For more than a generation afterwards, therefore, European external security was in the hands of NATO, and thus ultimately dominated by the United States. This applied to wider, non-military aspects of security policy (including Africa) as well. Fear of Communism remained strong among European political and military élites (some of whom had collaborated, and even fought in Russia), and only the US seemed strong enough to defend them, and their interests around the world. But there were practical arguments as well. For the British, a situation where the US was Number One, made them effectively Number Two, through the influence they could exert. They could never hope to have as much influence in a European organisation. For a number of smaller European countries, NATO and the US dominance, as well as the presence of the UK, was a useful counterweight to increasing economic dominance by France and Germany. These arguments continued to be important after the Cold War, and have not lost their relevance today, even in the apparently unrelated issue of Africa.

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[8] See for example, Schirman, *Quel ordre européen?*

[9] On this mentality, see Chuter, "The Anti-Myths of Munich"

[10] Literature on foreign volunteers of the Nazis is understandably scarce. See, however, Bishop, *Hitler's Foreign Divisions*, The French *Légion des volontaires français contre le bolchévisme*, which became the Charlemagne Division, has been studied in some depth. See especially Giolitto, *Volontaires français sous l'uniforme allemand,*. Its slogan was "For Europe Against Bolshevism".

[11] The Bevin Memorandum is printed in a number of document collections, including *Foreign Relations of the United States,* 1948, Vol 3, pp 4-6.

For more than a generation, European security meant being a good ally of the United States, adopting a fierce anti-communist posture at home and abroad, and subscribing to a defence policy that envisaged the early use of nuclear weapons in response to an attack. Large sections of the European population were hostile, or at best indifferent, to this policy, and indeed when the end of the Cold War came (and took European political elites completely by surprise) the whole concept of security needed to be rethought; a process that is by no means over now. Africa had only featured indirectly in this agenda, primarily through support (or at least tolerance) for the apartheid regime in South Africa, and of African leaders (like Mobutu of Zaire) who were regarded as reliably anti-communist. Moreover, this support was provided by individual states, often covertly or through surrogates, not through any announced or organised policy, as part of the larger Cold War struggle.

The actual European integration process had begun with the acknowledgement that economic and political unity had to come before any kind of common security policy was possible. It therefore proceeded through a series of stages. The first challenge was to ensure that Europe itself would be at peace. In 1950, Robert Schuman, then French Foreign Minister, proposed a Coal and Steel Community, to include Germany and the Benelux nations. His avowed aim was not only to further economic integration, but to make an arms race effectively impossible. The Community, founded in 1951, was the ancestor of the European Economic Community, founded in 1957. Gingerly, Europe began to experiment with ways of translating its increasing economic and political integration into some form of coordination on foreign policy. The result was European Political Cooperation, begun in 1970. Less ambitious than the French wanted, but as much as the Atlanticists (notably the UK) were prepared to accept, it was only ever a voluntary and limited arrangement, and Africa was seldom if ever discussed. .

By the late 1980s, this situation was recognised to be untenable. The enlarged European Community was probably the most important single economic actor on the planet, yet all of its wider security interests were handled by an organisation dominated by the United States. The fact that NATO survived at all after 1989 seems surprising in retrospect, but its survival had little to do with its intrinsic merits, or indeed those of any proposed alternatives. Rather, the fundamental political calculations of the various states had not changed very much since the 1950s. The French, who saw themselves abandoned by the Anglo-Saxons too often in the past, were keen to retain a treaty commitment to their defence against the unlikely possibility of another war in Europe.[12] The British, more than ever dependent on the US for strategic technologies, fought hard to retain NATO essentially unchanged, to preserve their position of influence with the US. Smaller NATO nations could see attraction in balancing a stronger Europe against a weaker, but still important NATO. [13] As before, and since, arguments about command structures, headquarters and organisational reform were really arguments about who would take final political decisions. These issues were more important than practical questions of missions and tasks, and the actual evolution of the overt security agenda (of which Africa is a prime example) has not really affected the underlying debate.

This was the background to the European Political Union Treaty debates, which culminated in the 1991 Maastricht Treaty.[14] There were broadly four ideas circulating in early 1991, although they were not necessarily entirely distinct from each other, and most states were prepared to consider at least two. At one end was the maximalist idea that foreign and security policy, and later perhaps defence, would be handled as far as possible in line with existing EC practices. This did not necessarily mean a Commissioner for Defence, but it would have meant a substantial role for the Commission, and a general move towards a supranational model of decision-making. The Commission itself tabled a draft Treaty along these lines, but it was too radical to attract much

[12] On the development of French security policy after 1919, see Chuter, *Humanity's Soldier: France and International Security*.
[13] For a survey of the thinking of major European states at the time, see Jolyon Howarth and Anand Menon (eds) *The European Union and National Defence Policy*. The author contributed the chapter on the UK.
[14] The rest of this section draws extensively on the author's personal experience.

support. Later in the same year, the incoming Dutch presidency tabled a draft which went in much the same direction, but which was withdrawn almost immediately after attracting severe criticism. At the other extreme, the UK proposed its own draft in early 1991. London would rather have seen no change at all, and what it proposed was a series of modest amendments to the 1986 Single European Act, itself essentially a revision of the 1957 Treaty. This idea attracted no support whatever, and was not seriously discussed.

Whilst a number of smaller nations would have been happy to see the Commission involved, as a way of balancing the dominant Franco-German axis, and some of the larger nations were equivocal, the British and French (unusually united) were agreed that the solution had to be essentially intergovernmental. They were, however, at opposite poles of the argument. The French, with some support, wanted to go much more quickly and much more deeply in the direction of a common security and defence policy than the British who, once again, would have preferred things to stay as they were. The eventual compromise was Article J4(1), which said that the "common foreign and security policy shall include all questions related to the security of the Union, including the eventual framing of a common defence policy, which might in time lead to a common defence." This was a complex verbal compromise solution only, which did nothing to resolve underlying differences.

Nor did it reflect any underlying agreement on what the "questions relating to the security of the union" actually were, or what a common defence would be, and against whom. Such questions were simply too difficult to address, and were left to be resolved at some later point. Rather, the issue was effectively one of political principle. A newly established sovereign entity – the EU – had to have all of the normal attributes of a sovereign country, and those included a foreign, security and ultimately defence, policy. The content of these policies, and to which regions they would apply, was less of an issue than the fact of their existence in the first place.

The highly theoretical and abstract discussions which followed the signature of the Treaty were soon interrupted by the real-life crisis in the Former Yugoslavia, and the possibility of the deployment of European troops to Bosnia. Two unpleasant truths rapidly became apparent. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of European forces were conscripts, still configured to face a threat from the direction of the Urals, which almost no one believed in any more. Public indifference and even hostility to the security policies of the Cold War meant that terms of conscription were short (sometimes as little as six months) and so the forces were simply not adequately trained to be sent abroad, even had public opinion been ready to permit that. Secondly, there was no structure to enable European forces to be commanded: all of that belonged to NATO, and was ultimately controlled by the United States. The politics and logistics of getting even small contributions to Bosnia were formidable: deployment further from home (eg to Africa) could simply not be contemplated.

The Bosnia experience was formative for ESDP thinking in many ways, some positive and some negative. It produced a rapid and unexpected improvement in relations between the British and the French, the only two nations who could deploy professional troops with experience of overseas operations, and the two nations who dominated planning and assessment of the crisis. It revealed a common European orientation and set of interests fundamentally different from that of the US, and it demonstrated the kind of things which would have to be done both nationally and at a European level if a proper Security and Defence Policy was ever to be adopted. But it also revealed how difficult it was to reach a common position on a crisis even on Europe's doorstep. History and culture suddenly became factors, with German support for fellow-Catholics in Croatia, for example, originally a domestic political issue, becoming an international complication. Countries with troops on the ground tended to have a different view of events from those who did not. Local actors proved to be far more resourceful and cunning than expected, negotiating with each other behind the backs of western mediators. Most of all, the inherent complexity of the situation, the lack of reliable information and the incessant cacophony of the media made arriving at a common analysis and plan of action effectively impossible. In any event, as was later to be the case with Africa, Bosnia was only the language in which debates about wider strategic issues was couched.

NATO did become involved once the fighting was over, and Europe contributed large numbers of troops to the NATO-led IFOR and SFOR forces, which took over from the UN. The limitations of the NATO command structure became very apparent here as well, and the Europeans came to resent not only the American obsession with force protection, but also the way in which Bosnia was absorbed as just another ingredient into endless struggles of the vast and byzantine foreign policy bureaucracy in Washington. It was obvious that this could not go on.

The ESDP is one of those curious cases where practice has proved easier than theory, and so Europe has now arrived at a point, propelled by the force of events, which was not foreseen, and could not have been predicted, twenty years ago. In a way that perhaps he could not have anticipated, therefore, Schumann was right to say that "Europe will not be made at once, nor according to a single master plan of construction. It will be built by concrete *achievements*, which create de facto dependence, mutual interests and the desire for common action."[15] But this is not to say that the basic divergences between European nations have been resolved. By no means all European states agreed at the time with the argument that the development of a military capability was a necessary condition for political independence, still less that it should later be practiced on unsuspecting Africans. One extremely important development which affected the debate was the accession of Nordic states, especially Finland and Sweden, to the EU. Well organised and capable, they were much closer in spirit to the British (and to some extent the Dutch) and took a pragmatic, rather than mystical, view of Europe's future. As the Finnish Presidency in 1999 demonstrated, the Nordics generally preferred to make progress on practical issues, and were more concerned with operational capability than with the wider strategic political uses to which it might be put.

There were also substantial differences between member states on the very principle of sending troops abroad. For many states, again including the Nordics, contributions to UN peacekeeping were acceptable, but actual military operations abroad in pursuit of political objectives were something else entirely.[16] These divisions sometimes extended to the internal workings of governments themselves: in Bonn the Defence Ministry was almost fanatically pro-NATO, whilst the Foreign Ministry was much closer to the French view.

Nonetheless, a long, slow, sometimes convoluted process has brought Europe from an obsession with a threat coming from the Urals to a hesitant security engagement with continents across the seas. But to these historic divergences over security policy and the use of force outside Europe have been added a whole new layer of difficulty and complexity, related to the very different experiences, conceptions and objectives of European nations in Africa.

OUT OF AFRICA …. AND BACK AGAIN

It is true that Schumann's 1950 Declaration mentioned "the development of the African continent" as "one of Europe's essential tasks." But he was speaking at a time when, paradoxically, Africa could be seen "as one entity" because it was all colonised, when it was normal to travel overland, by rail and by bus, from Cape Town to Leopoldville, the capital of the then Belgian Congo, via Salisbury, the capital of white Rhodesia. These were the days when Empire was taken for granted, when independence was decades, if not generations, away, when and the long-term plan was a continent like Australia, full of white settlers and linked politically and economically to Europe. Within a decade almost all of that vision had collapsed.

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[15] The text of this and other documents is at http://www.schuman.info/

[16] As a Danish officer said to the author over lunch one day in 1992 "In my country, public opinion sees the military for the defence of the country, and maybe a bit of UN peacekeeping. But that's it. They wouldn't understand why you would want to send troops abroad." The Danish rejection of the Maastricht Political Union Treaty in a referendum in 1992 was partly due, according to Danish officials at the time, to fears that their conscript soldiers would be sent off to fight for the economic interests of the major European powers.

Its legacy has been a Europe hopelessly divided in its perception of Africa, and in its historical relations with the continent. No two European nations have anything like the same set of experiences, either before or after the colonial era, which is one reason why "Europe" as a concept, and as an actor, is sometimes difficult to grasp for Africans, and often seems to act in contradictory ways. It is these divisions which, more than any other single factor, explain the slow and halting development of EU security policy towards Africa, and why it has proved so difficult to go beyond national policies. The result is that, uniquely, the history of "European" security policy towards Africa, especially crisis management, is much more the history of the effects of changing national positions than of it is of institutional development as such. The second has been effectively a hostage to the first.

At its simplest, we can distinguish four types of European involvement in Africa. The first is that of the former colonial powers. Chief among these are Britain and France, but of course the list also includes Portugal, Belgium and to a lesser extent Spain. Experiences were by no means the same, and empires ended in different ways at different times. Nevertheless, all of these nations have historical links with Africa, and in most cases current links as well. Governments take Africa seriously as part of their bilateral foreign policies, and there is a reasonably informed intellectual and media class, as well as universities and research establishments devoted to studying the continent. In many cases there are also strong commercial links. These countries have a history of military operations in Africa, and always retained at least limited professional forces capable of operating there. They also have a long history of training African militaries.

A second group of states, including the Nordics, the Netherlands and Germany, have historically seen Africa as a development issue, and Development Ministries in these countries are often the most important actors in framing Africa policy, even in its security aspects. Many of these governments provide lavish funding for NGOs, both at home and in Africa, and their policy towards the continent gives a large emphasis to human rights and democratic norms. Politically, it tends to be difficult for such governments to work with the security forces themselves, and in some cases they are legally inhibited from doing so. As a result, much of their work is at arms length, through NGOs and Civil Society groups, parliaments and local think-tanks and institutes.

A third group of states (examples might be Austria and Ireland) have no particular connection with Africa, nor are they major donors, but when they occupy chairs or rotating presidencies they will try to conscientiously move the agenda forward. And then there is Everybody Else: European nations with no great interest in Africa and no particular desire to acquire it, often with other pressing foreign policy concerns that they would like the EU to look at.

The collective European policy that emerges from this is not really a compromise, but rather an ill coordinated set of national visions and appreciations of Africa, with different ideas about what the continent means and what should be done. Moreover, and again uniquely for Africa, the mechanics of international cooperation are greatly complicated by the different distributions of power on African issues in national capitals: a bilateral meeting between France and Sweden on Africa will find two very different teams on either side of the table. Africa is, as we shall see, a laboratory for many competing concepts, but it is also a theatre in which national policies can be exhibited. For countries which place development at the heart of their foreign policy, for example, Africa is by far the largest area of operations, and they have every interest in maintaining the focus on development, and even trying to extend traditional development concepts into new areas, such as security sector reform.[17]

Superimposed on this relatively simple scheme, however, are a series of others. Most obviously, there are the bilateral links that remain from the colonial era; which are in various stages of repair, often continuing through the inertia of language and personal links. Many of these relationships are positive, but all are complex, and sometimes pit the interests of African political elites against their own people. Some bilateral relations have turned markedly sour, such as that of France with the Côte

[17] A slightly different analysis, but one which reaches essentially the same conclusion, is Bergeon, 'Le Partenariat stratégique "UE-Afrique" face aux "situations de fragilité"'

d'Ivoire, and the UK with Zimbabwe, where the awkward relationships complicate not only bilateral dealings, but also attempts to construct policies within the EU. There are also new bilateral links being formed (Denmark has been very active in the SADC region, for example). In some cases, European states have partnered with African states to work in third countries (eg the Netherlands and South Africa in the DRC). Likewise, Norway and Switzerland are not really part of "Europe" in this sense, but are active in Africa; the first in development, the second in areas such as security sector reform. Finally, the very concept of Europe has itself been changing: the Europe which met Africa in 2007 was larger than the Europe which met Africa in 2000.

Then there is trade. The UK, France, Germany and Spain dominate Foreign Direct Investment in Africa, but most of this goes to a very small number of the wealthier African states (notably South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt). Because Africa's exports are mainly primary products, exporting countries are dominated by Libya and Algeria with natural gas and oil, followed by Nigeria. Italy, France, Spain Germany and the UK are the largest trade partners for Africa, which is what one would expect given that they are also the largest economies. All this has the paradoxical effect that Africa as a whole has a trade surplus with Europe, essentially because of oil and gas exports from these few countries, even as much of Africa suffers from continued European protectionism.[18] Meanwhile, the Economic Partnership Agreements entered into by the EU since 2002 are intended to promote regional economic development, but the groups of African states selected, even if they make sense economically, do not always correspond to those of the RECs.

European states are also members of international groupings. Britain and France are permanent members of the Security Council, Britain, France and Germany are members of the G8, which has its own Action Plan for Africa, and which is also attended by the President of the Commission. The G8 has invited a number of African countries – especially South Africa, and more recently Nigeria, to its meetings. It is, in fact, becoming hard to distinguish between the G8 and the G-20, where the above European countries, as well as the Commission, the European Central Bank and Italy are members. (South Africa is the only African member state). To these must be added the British Commonwealth (of which Mozambique is a member), the *Francophonie*, and the France-Africa Summit, whose 2010 version was attended, according to the official communiqué, by "fifty-one delegations from African States… along with representatives of the African Union, the European Union, the United Nations, the International Organization of the Francophonie and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations."[19]

Africans can therefore be pardoned for sometimes being unsure what "Europe" is, and for complaining (as they often do) that it does not speak with a single voice. One consequence is that senior national and international figures in Africa are frequently lobbied competitively by different people and organisations, all, in some sense, European. The following example (drawn from several anecdotes) may illustrate the point. On Monday, a senior official at the AU is visited by a Spanish diplomat working for the OECD in Paris, on Tuesday by a German working for the Commission in Brussels. On Wednesday the Dutch Embassy brings a team from The Hague, on Thursday there is a local representative of one of the German *Stiftung*, and on Friday representatives of a Norwegian or Swiss NGO. All may be offering cooperation programmes, with money attached, covering the same area, but without any mutual coordination, or even mutual awareness. Indeed, for some AU officials, life consists of little else but receiving prospective donors with their own ideas. And since the AU depends overwhelmingly on Europe for its funding, such visitors have to be received with attention.

Finally, there are what might be seen as different ideas in Europe of what Africa is. Although, as we have seen, Algeria and Libya are major economic powers in Africa (and Libya is largest

[18] 2009 figures from the European Commission at http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Africa-EU_-_economic_indicators,_trade_and_investment

[19] The English version is at http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/IMG/pdf/2010_Africa-France_Summit_Final_Declaration.pdf.

importer from the EU) for many European states, these countries are not part of Africa at all. In many capitals, the department responsible for Libya and Algeria will also be responsible for the Middle East, but not countries such as Chad and Niger, with which these countries are much involved. Indeed, both in government and in academia, "Africa" is automatically taken to mean Africa south of the Sahara. This has various practical consequences, including, for example, an inability to understand the extent of Libyan influence in sub-Saharan Africa. It also has the curious consequence that the two Europe-Africa Summits held on the continent of Africa have been hosted by countries (Egypt and Libya) which in the eyes of Europeans are not in "Africa" at all.

In addition, individual European states often have very specialised concerns about certain parts of Africa. As well as trade, aid and investment, many European states look at Africa, at least partly through the prism of immigration. Mediterranean states have a major problem with immigration from or through the countries of the Maghreb. Spain, for example, retains the colonial enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco, and desperate economic migrants who reach there, across the barbed wire and machine guns, are in the Schengen Area. (To add to the confusion, Morocco is not a member of the African Union).[20] In the earliest European debates about Mediterranean security in 1992, countries such as Italy and Spain were foremost in arguing that European naval forces should be used to combat illegal immigration from North Africa. France has a particular problem with family-related immigration from its ex-colony Algeria. States further north in Europe are often the ultimate destinations of illegal immigrants. For other countries, West Africa is important as a haunt of organised crime, and particularly as a transhipment point for cocaine being smuggled from Latin America into Europe.

History is also a factor, even after the end of the colonial era. For example, France supported both the UNITA and FNLA forces in the Angolan Civil War against the Marxist MPLA government, and Germany and others provided assistance to the FNLA. France was also a firm military supporter of apartheid era South Africa, whereas many other European states provided support for the ANC, and Sweden even provided financial assistance. These things have not always been forgotten.

All of these factors complicate policy-making, because they mean that different EU states have very different concepts of what Africa is, sometimes overlaid on each other, and sometimes coexisting in the same government. Of course it is doubtful anyway whether there can be anything as simple as one concept of a continent that is so enormous and so various, although divided views among Europeans do not make the task any easier. But here, one would hope that the former colonial powers would at least have some common views. Unfortunately, that is not really true either. Britain and France have tended historically, for understandable reasons, to focus mainly on their former colonies, and are only now tentatively broadening their focus. This is true at expert level also: Anglophone scholars rarely study Francophone Africa, and vice versa. Ironically, the two countries upon which any sensible ESDP African policy must disproportionately rest are also the two which are farthest apart in their ESDP policies overall, and on the role, if any, that European forces should play in security problems, in Africa and elsewhere. It is especially unfortunate that they are divided, rather than united, by their respective colonial experiences, and what followed.

Britain's African empire was acquired, as one might expect, somewhat haphazardly and largely for commercial reasons. The first colonies, which became Ghana and Nigeria, began essentially as trading posts. Sierra Leone was set up as a colony for freed slaves, and the Cape Colony was taken from the Dutch as a naval base for use against Napoleon. On the East coast, the imperial acquisitions were largely the work of the businessman Cecil Rhodes, who hoped to set up a commercial empire extending from "the Cape to Cairo". The British government gave him a charter to do that, but refused to support him financially. Rhodes eventually penetrated as far north as the present-day Malawi, although his British South Africa Company never paid a single dividend. Ultimately, during the frenzy of imperialism known as the "Scramble for Africa," the British formally

[20] Morocco left the Organisation of African Unity in 1984, as a protest against the recognition by a number of states of the Polisaro Front's Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

annexed what are now Kenya and Uganda, which had been originally been run on a commercial basis by the British East Africa Company. The also pushed south from Egypt (which they had effectively controlled from the 1880s) into Sudan. Finally, they acquired Tanganyika (now Tanzania) from Germany after the First World War.[21]

For the British, Africa was never the heart of their empire. That was India, which had its own government ministry, its Indian Civil Service and Army and its own Minister in the British Cabinet. By contrast, Africa was, and remains to some extent, a diplomatic backwater, and had to share a Minister (the Secretary of State for the Colonies) with many other British possessions around the world. Ambitious plans for mass white settlement in Africa were never realised, mainly for financial reasons, and in the end the British let all their colonies go easily, except for Kenya and Rhodesia, where there were relatively large settler communities. After the 1950s, the link with the US, which had developed at breakneck speed after 1941, shifted the British strategic orientation towards the Atlantic, and financial pressures led to a withdrawal from "East of Suez", and then from East of Cyprus as well. Africa was simply too expensive to retain, and the commercial promises of Empire had never really materialised. There was no strong Africa lobby in London, and service in the continent was not a path to promotion in the military.

British military involvement in Africa after independence was really limited to providing training on the ground and in the UK for officers, with occasional deployment and exercises. The British-dominated Commonwealth Monitoring Force deployed to Rhodesia/Zimbabwe in early 1980 to provide stability before the elections, and a much smaller British Military Advisory and Training Team remained for many years afterwards. The British also provided a significant contribution to UNTAG at the time of Namibian independence in 1990. The same BMATT model was applied, in whole or in part, to both South Africa and Mozambique in the 1990s.[22] The British favoured this quiet, behind the scenes approach, which was inspired by their traditional policies in the area. The intervention in Sierra Leone in 2000 was therefore highly atypical. It represented the first combat deployment on the continent for 35 years, and the forces involved were quickly withdrawn. The emphasis these days is on joint activities between the MoD; the Foreign Office and DFID, through the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool, which seeks to provide "peace support capacity building of African Armed forces which form essential building blocks for the African Peace and Security Architecture."[23]

The origins, nature and consequences of French military involvement in Africa are absolutely different.[24] Apart from Algeria, the main French colonial focus had always been the Americas and Asia. All this changed with the defeat by the Prussians in 1870 -71. One way in which the French tried to recover from the shock of defeat was through a deliberate policy of the colonisation of northern and western Africa. This was partly a matter of prestige, but more importantly it was to gather economic resources and manpower for what was assumed would be further wars against Germany, whose population and economic potential exceeded their own. To an extent this was successful. French colonial troops fought in both wars, and indeed they made up two thirds of De Gaulle's Army in 1944.

There were other motivations also. Many believed that France had a duty to export the ideals of the Revolution throughout the world, irrespective of the skin colour of those receiving them. Indeed, some even speculated that, after a certain interval, anyone in the colonies might be allowed to apply for French citizenship, which, in the Republican way of thinking, had nothing to do with birth or ethnicity. Although the French Empire had its fair share of brutality, cynicism and corruption, it never entirely lost this idealistic (if also arrogant) strand in its thinking. Thus, the Senegalese poet and cultural theorist Léopold Senghor, first President of that country on independence, had previously been an overseas member of the French parliament, a Minister in several French governments, one of the drafters of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic, and a member of the *Académie Française.*

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[21] An excellent general history of this period is Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa*,
[22] For BMATT activities when they were at their height, see Rupiyah, "The 'Expanding Torrent':
[23] See www.operations.mod.uk/africa/bkgrnd.htm
[24] For a general survey, see Gourévitch, *La France en Afrique*

The French fought a bitter war to retain Algeria (then legally part of France), but the rest of their colonies became independent in 1960, under carefully controlled circumstances. The French did not intend to let them escape control, even if for financial reasons it was not practicable to continue to run them directly. They were seen as a source of potential economic strength (again Germany was the comparator), as two dozen guaranteed votes in the UN General Assembly, and more generally as a means for France to continue to play a major role on the world stage. With the loss of Indo-China in 1954, the African colonies were effectively all the French had left to make this possible. The model was essentially the same: a political system patterned in detail after the Fifth Republic, a common currency (the CFA Franc, backed by Paris) and French tutelage over foreign and security policy. A series of (originally secret) Defence Agreements were signed, which gave the French an effective right of intervention in their ex-colonies, and a number of military bases.[25]

This model, known somewhat dismissively as *Francafrique*, has been extremely controversial. It relied on personal networks, occult funding and close French supervision and control of their ex-colonies. It was not a democratic system – indeed, one-party states and personal rule were the norm. Corruption was rife, and the line between government and business interests was always being crossed.[26] (There are persistent allegations that some of the money found its way back into the French political system). Its defenders have argued that it brought unprecedented stability to the region, certainly compared with other parts of Africa, as well as economic growth and prosperity, backed ultimately by a strong European currency. Moreover, the model certainly worked better than the competing system of British winner-take-all elections in divided and fragile political systems. The countries were stable because all of the potential seekers or power and wealth were "watered" as the French say, and thus stayed within the system.

From independence, French African policy was decided from the Élysée, often making use of personal contacts between heads of state. There has always been a "*Monsieur Afrique*" at the Élysée, beginning with Jacques Foccart, a wartime collaborator of De Gaulle, who built a massive personal network on the continent, and effectively ran French African policy, not just under De Gaulle but some of his successors also, until his death in 1997. An indication of the importance of this post (which still exists) is that it was held from 1986-92 by Jean-Christophe Mitterrand, the son of the President, known flippantly in French political circles as *Papamadi* ("Daddy told me"). There was also a separate Cooperation Ministry, essentially devoted to the more formal aspects of the relationship with Africa. Much of the shadiest business, on the other hand, was carried out through the then state-owned petrol company Elf Aquitaine ("Elf Africaine" as it was known to its detractors) and by the foreign intelligence service, the SDECE, later DGSE. Africa was also the main theatre of operations for the only two units of the French Army which were wholly professional – the *Légion étrangère* and the *Troupes de marine.* Before professionalization in 2000, they tended to dominate all posts requiring international experience, and at one point earlier in this decade, both the Chief of the Armed Forces (the CEMA) and the Chief of the Army (the CEMAT) were from the *Troupes de marine*, and indeed had joined the same regiment in the same year.

This system was powerful, but limited. It was enclosed and spoke only to itself: many of those involved, especially the military, did not speak English and had never set foot in Anglophone Africa. It was also primarily defensive in orientation, trying to preserve French status in the world, and to establish a safe area, which the French could dominate. For this reason, the French were also attentive to any sign of Anglo-Saxon encroachment into their *pré carré*[27], and suspicious, verging on paranoid, of the ambitions of other countries, especially in francophone countries with raw materials.

[25] Some of these agreements have been published: see for example at http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/dossiers/cote-divoire/pdf/accord_de_defense_24041961.pdf

[26] The term seems to have been invented, or at least popularised, by Francois-Xavier Verschave in his bitterly critical book of that name published in 1998.

[27] Originally, a double line of fortified towns constructed to protect the northern borders of France in the 17th century, more figuratively any private domain.

Understandably, there was little active cooperation with the British during this period, and much mutual suspicion. In turn, this meant that European security cooperation in Africa was essentially impossible.

This system started to break down at the end of the Cold War, partly as attention shifted to Europe, and partly as the whole environment in Africa changed, with a new western emphasis on democracy and governance.[28] The reality since has been very complicated, and such was the secrecy surrounding many aspects of French African policy that it is often hard to know how much has changed, even now. It is fair to say though that French policy overall has been more multilateral, less secretive, and much less dependent on the presence of military forces, than it was in the past. On the one hand, close relations still exist with former colonies, and discreet financial and political networks remain important. The Defence and Security Review ordered by President Sarkozy after his election in 2007 was advertised as making substantial changes to "Francafrique", but commentators were generally dismissive of the practical effects.[29] On the other hand, French African policy is now more outward-looking, with more attention given to multilateral organisations, and to Anglophone states, notably South Africa. If French troops still remain in Africa, they are these days more concerned with support to the APSA.

With the end of the Cold War, the West began to experiment gingerly with multi-party systems in Africa, and the French were part of this tendency. But the results have been mixed to say the least, and the case of the Côte d'Ivoire shows most spectacularly that multi-party politics essentially destroyed the stability of the old system without bringing any new factors of stability to replace them. This happened also in Rwanda, a former Belgian colony that the French had taken under their wing. Strong French pressure on the Hutu government to move to a multi-party system, and subsequently to agree to negotiations with the invading RPF forces backfired horribly The French felt, and continue to feel, extremely bitter about the whole Rwandan experience[30]

For all the reasons given above, an EU African security policy was only possible with a substantial measure of Anglo-French cooperation, or at least mutual tolerance, and especially if the French, with their much greater political commitment, were to accept it. The British, heavily committed in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s, as well as retaining large numbers of troops in Ulster, took on new commitments in Afghanistan and then Iraq after the turn of the millennium. They were unwilling to deploy troops to Africa themselves in all but token numbers, but prepared ultimately to allow others to do so.[31] The real breakthrough, however, came with the French, for two reasons. The post-Rwanda trauma, confirmed and extended by the failure in the Ivory Coast in 2002, convinced the French that unilateral military adventures in Africa were no longer possible. In future, they would have to be European. The wary rapprochement with the British after 1998, and the strategic move towards a more Europe-centred foreign policy in the 1990s, also made the French less sensitive about he involvement of other states in Africa. By the late 1990s, therefore, European security cooperation in Africa became a great deal easier to contemplate.

EXPERIMENTS IN AFRICA

Although the Petersberg Declaration of June 1992 on strengthening the operational role of the Western European Union foresaw the use of European troops not only for territorial defence, but also for "humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks" and "tasks of combat forces in crisis

[28] On why and how French Africa fell apart see Smith and Glaser, *Comment la France a perdu l'Afrique*,
[29] See for example Smith and Glaser, *Sarko en Afrique,*
[30] On France and Rwanda see Lugan, *Président Mitterrand, l'armée française et le Rwanda,* which is based heavily on declassified official documents, and, more polemically, Péan, *Noires fureurs, blancs menteurs*. On the political exploitation of the 1994 massacres see Pottier, *Re-imagining Rwanda*
[31] It is unfortunately typical of the sensitive nature of Anglo-French attitudes to EU military operations in Africa even today that French officials have claimed privately that the UK has lobbied potential troop contributors not to take part. UK officials indignantly deny any such thing.

management, including peacemaking," it was far from clear to those involved in the drafting (including the present author) what this actually meant, or how the careful balancing of language recognising both the nascent European Union and NATO was actually to be translated into practical arrangements.[32] The discussion, once again, was theoretical and political, intended to define a list of tasks that would satisfy both the European and the Atlanticist tendencies, without offending NATO and the US. No thought was given to how the actual tasks might be carried out, or where. Specific scenarios were regarded as too sensitive to discuss, even in private, and there was, at this stage, no thought of deploying to Africa. Scarcely six months later, European troops were deployed to Bosnia, and were to stay there for a decade, but under the flags of two other international organisations. Yet the reasons for this deployment anticipated much of what subsequently happened in Africa, in the sense that it was really about other things. There was little interest in Bosnia as such, but much more worry that inaction by Europe would threaten the public acceptability of the new Union, and the national ratifications of the Treaty.

If the Bosnia deployment was driven by short-term political factors, there remained the question of how European security and defence were to be given some practical expression in the future. The French, supported by a number of other nations, saw things primarily in political terms, as described above. A Common Foreign and Security Policy and a Common Defence meant having the capability to actually act independently. From their own history, the French had thoroughly absorbed the lesson that only independent capabilities actually allow an actor to be independent, irrespective of what treaties or agreements might say.[33] After the 1956 Suez debacle, the British had progressively cuddled up closer and closer to the US to avoid a repetition, a course of action that was simply not open to the French, and by extension not to a united Europe either. To be an independent actor on the world stage, therefore, Europe needed to have its own dedicated capabilities, whether or not they were ever actually used in anger. This would include a command and control system, forces under European command, transport assets, intelligence, common equipment procurement and the ability to plan operations. Anything else would simply leave Europe an appendage of the United States.

This was a popular view, but far from the only one. Some countries, led by the UK, feared anything that might weaken NATO, or annoy the US. Others agreed in principle but were worried about the cost. Others had difficulty in imagining what kind of operations European forces might actually conduct. Still others viewed the whole idea of operations outside Europe with indifference, or even hostility. Many nations held more than one of these views. It was in this context that operations in Africa gradually came to seem the solution.

Most importantly, Europe does not need NATO's permission to operate in Africa. In addition, such operations were in any case becoming easier to contemplate as the French position moderated from the late 1990s. The French had already conceived the RECAMP scheme (*Renforcement des capacités africaines de maintien de la paix*) in the mid 1990s, as their attempt to get into the peace support training market. It was notable for being aimed beyond France's traditional partners, and conducted on a regional basis, with the presence of other European states solicited also. The outlines of a future collective European initiative were therefore already visible, and indeed the final logical step, taken in 2005, was the transformation of the national RECAMP scheme into a European one.[34] Relations with the British on Africa had also taken a turn for the better. The 1998 St Malo meeting between the French President and the British Prime Minister, already referred to, produced two initiatives. One, much publicised, was a joint Declaration on European Defence, which showed how far the UK had come in less than a decade. If pro forma references to NATO were still included, it was none the less agreed that "the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises" and that the Union will also need to have recourse to suitable military means

[32] The text is available *at* www.weu.int/documents/920619peten.pdf
[33] See Chuter, *Humanity's Soldier*, pp. 214-337.
[34] A description of the current scheme and its history is at www.consilium.europa.eu%2Fuedocs%2FcmsUpload%2F090211-Factsheet_EURORECAMP-version2_EN.pdf

(European capabilities pre-designated within NATO's European pillar or national or multinational European means outside the NATO framework)."[35] At the same meeting, however, but with much less publicity, there was agreement to work together more closely in Africa. The content of the agreement was modest – joint visits, meetings, exchange of staff - but it was an important first step, especially for the French, who were understandably nervous about their position in the continent. In practical terms, its outputs have been less than was hoped, and it is not yet clear what changes the new coalition government will seek to make.[36]

Nonetheless, UK and French interests were beginning to converge in Africa, albeit from starkly different directions, and this meant that a collective EU policy was much more feasible than it had previously been. For France, as indicated above, working multilaterally and through the EU had become a priority, and the French were also beginning to put more effort into development issues, and into what was just becoming known as "governance". Moreover, if the "capacity for autonomous action" and the "credible military forces" were ever to be developed, they had to be practiced on something, where NATO and the US could not obstruct. That meant Africa. The British had come from the other direction, as the development lobby, enjoying a new lease of life under the new Labour government, started to use its sizeable budget to push into areas of security and defence where it had never previously ventured. The British were not particularly keen to see EU military operations, but, if they were necessary, they should be in an area that did not pose a threat to NATO primacy. That meant Africa. And the two nations were involved in a host of other multilateral initiatives in the early 21st century, which had the effect of forcing Africa further up the political agenda than it would otherwise have been.

Clearly, though, a long-term capability for operations outside Europe could not be built on these two countries alone. It was therefore essential to develop the expeditionary capability of other European states, notably Germany and Spain. This did not have to be in military combat units alone: in 2003, the French proposed the creation of a European Gendarmerie Force. This proposal was accepted, and the Force became operational in January 2006, with contributions from France, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands (Romania joined in 2009). It has the capability to deploy 800 personnel in an international force on 30 days notice.[37] The Force has not yet deployed to Africa, but could clearly do so when a militarised public order capability is required.

Nonetheless, the ability to project sizeable military forces, capable of combat operations, was fundamental to the successful construction of a European defence capability, and to the political independence which this was expected provide. Africa was the chosen domain, for the reasons described above. Operation ARTEMIS (technically the Interim Emergency Multinational Force) was deployed to Bunia in the province of Ituri in the Democratic Republic of Congo between June and September 2003, after the withdrawal of the invading Ugandan forces had left a security vacuum that the Uruguayan battalion in Bunia was unable to fill. Some 1400 strong, the force became fully operational in July 2003. Technically, it was there at the invitation of the United Nations, to support the UN force (MONUC), which had already been deployed for several years. The mission does seem to have been genuinely useful, in addition to its wider political objectives. It was, however, largely a French operation: they were the framework nation (the first test of the framework nation concept agreed in July 2002), and also provided the air power, based in Chad.[38] The operational headquarters was an improvised building in the car park of the French Ministry of Defence. The financing arrangements were necessarily innovative since, as a military crisis management operation the funding had to come from nations, and some nations were happier to contribute than others.

35 The text is available at http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/news/2002/02/joint-declaration-on-eu-new01795
36 A substantive review of the issues is Chafer and Cumming, *Punching Below Their Weight?* http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/events/view/-/id/1574/
37 See http://www.eurogendfor.org/Default.aspx for more details.
38 See http://pbpu.unlb.org/PBPS/Pages/Public/Download.aspx?docid=572&cat=0&scat=0 for the UN's assessment of the operation.

In some ways, ARTEMIS was a transitional operation, nicely demonstrating how increasing French willingness to consider multinational operations facilitated the mounting of a genuine EU initiative. It helped that the operation was taking place in a Francophone state but not in a former French colony. The mission was, indeed, first conceived as a purely French one, but morphed into an EU operation subsequently, when the political attractions of doing so, and the risks of going solo, became apparent. Although 90% of the troops were French, several other nations (including the UK and Belgium) committed small forces, and most EU nations contributed to the HQ in Paris. The fact that the bulk of the force was made up of French professionals, and that a small UK contingent (generally believed to be Special Forces) was with them, guaranteed that response to any rebel activity would be robust, as indeed was the case.[39]

The operation had demonstrated that European forces were capable of acting autonomously outside Africa, albeit under command of a nation familiar with the environment. It was followed by another limited operation in the DRC, this time known as EUFOR DRC, whose objective was to support MONUC during the 2006 Congolese elections. A forward element was deployed in Kinshasa itself, but the main body of the force was deployed in Gabon. Significantly, on this occasion, the operational level HQ was at Potsdam in Germany, under command of a German 3-star General, whilst the tactical HQ was still commanded by a 2-star French General. The final, and longest, EU military operation to date was EUFOR CAR/Chad, which ran from January 2008 to March 2009, until it was replaced by a UN force. Although the operational HQ was in France, the operational commander was a 3-star Irish General, whilst the Force Commander in theatre was once again French. The three major EU operations showed a steady increase in size and complexity, with more nations participating and holding command and staff positions. Other, smaller, operations have been carried out as well, notably EUNAVFOR Somalia, but their wider significance lies not in numbers, but in their ambitions, and their inculcation of the habit of working together outside Europe, and also outside NATO and US control. Whilst it would be overly cynical to deny the humanitarian element of these missions altogether, it remains true that that is only one part of a much larger and more complex game. French officials in 2006, for example, were quite clear that German involvement in the EUFOR DRC mission was a much greater political prize than any stabilisation of the country during the elections, however welcome that might be.

Yet there was an evident discontinuity here. Even while Operation ARTEMIS was in progress, work was in hand on the new European Security Strategy, finally published in December 2003. But whilst the document contains scattered references to Africa as a source of hazily defined threats to Europe, only a very attentive reader would have been able to deduce that the deployment to the DRC had in fact taken place. The document was very much along the US/NATO model of the time, and seemed largely concerned with demonstrating that the EU took issues like terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as seriously as they did. Nothing was said about the development of an independent military capability, or what it would be used for.[40] Five years later, the Implementation Report did make more references to Africa, but largely in the context of cooperation with regional institutions, and said less, overall, about Africa than it said about Iran and the Middle East. This disparity is interesting but not surprising. It is easy to agree language on cybercrime and piracy (two new themes in the 2008 Report). It is much more difficult to agree on how to describe the purpose of EU military activities in Africa except in the vaguest possible terms of promoting stability, and the dangers posed by "state fragility."

PEACE ON EARTH?

Neither traditional military operations nor gendarmerie deployments are the whole story however, and to understand the full extent of the –sometimes-confused – European defence and security relationship with Africa two other elements have to be considered. From very early on, the

[39] See Homan, *Operation Artemis.*
[40] The texts are collected at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showpage.aspx?id=266&lang=EN

EU has played a role in civilian crisis management and reconstruction, unlike NATO, which struggled to find a less militarised role. To some extent this role – first practised in the Balkans – arose because the EU was frozen out of organised military involvement. But it is also true that it is a role the EU has since gained much experience and expertise in. Secondly, there are the many advisory and training missions the EU has carried out in the Balkans, the Middle and Near East, and in Africa. These are generally aimed at reform of the defence, security and justice systems. How do they fit in to the overall picture?

There is a tendency to underestimate the phenomenal change that has come over Europe since the Second World War. The transition from a zone of constant conflict and atrocity – worse then anything Africa has ever seen – to a haven of peace, seems so abrupt and so bewildering that it might fairly be called miraculous. It took Europe perhaps a generation to fully internalise these developments, but. and then, as time passed, the memory of the very particular and extreme circumstances that enabled the European integration process to begin when it did, have rather been forgotten. It seemed a pattern that would be easy to repeat elsewhere

For their part, Africans looked to the success of the EU with interest, and much of the architecture of the AU – including the terms "African Peace and Security Architecture" was directly imitated from the EU. It seemed a good model for combining forces and playing a wider international role. However, by the time that independent African states became conscious of the EU as an actor on the world stage, it had already become wealthy, powerful and united, and was an association of strong and capable states, whose members had taken a deliberate decision to pool elements of their sovereignty. In Africa, the situation was diametrically opposed, even if the desire to build a peaceful continent was equally present. The AU actually had more ambitious objectives for pooled security than did the EU, even though its member states were weaker and les capable, and tended to retain control of their security because it was often the only element of national sovereignty they possessed. The EU has encouraged all these moves from the beginning, not least because it wants an organised and coherent partner, and because it is easier to influence one organisation than 53 states.

A natural progression in EU thinking was a desire to spread the virtues of peaceful approached to the resolution of disputes to other, less fortunate areas. If Europe could do it, went the argument, then surely any other region could. St Paul had famously said in his *Epistle to the Galatians,* that "… ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus…. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. " Christianity was the first universalist religion, and the status of Christian came before any other. With the decay of religious belief from the 18th century came the wish to identify universal ethical standards, not by revelation, but by reason. Immanuel Kant was among those who made the attempt, and he believed he had identified such ethical standards. Kant dreamed of a "world civil-society" in which all people shared the same self-evident ethical standards, and became part of the international society of reason. If these ideas were indeed universal, then it was necessary to export them, as St Paul had exported what was originally a Jewish sect to the rest of the world. Kant was only one of the thinkers to attempt to define ethical standards by rational means, and the consequences of the collective failure to do so are an important, if largely hidden, component of modern European thinking.[41] The urge to propagate ideals and standards, reinforced by victory against the obscurantist forces of collaboration, has always been part of that thinking, even if it is often incoherent in practice.

There was also a domestic political dimension. The defeat of the collaborationist regimes in 1945 left a window open for the advent of modern political and social ideas, but also amounted to a victory for democracy and ideas of limits on the power of government. Much of Europe had fallen into the hands of charismatic authoritarian figures by 1939, and more was to do so during the war. Re-establishing the Rule of Law was a major priority for the new Europe, and the timing of the European Declaration of Human Rights, agreed in 1950, was no accident. The new rulers of Europe were

[41] See MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.

determined to turn their back on the authoritarian past and to build new democratic institutions, tasks in which they had considerable success. Then it was necessary to spread the message.

Africa was a particularly obvious target for such proselytizing, because, under other guises, it already had a long history there, ever since the colonial powers set out to remodel Africa along European lines. As we have seen, the French considered making "little Africans" Frenchmen in due course, and all other colonial powers saw themselves constructing a society in Africa from nothing: no traditions, no ethics, no structures, no literature. All had to be imported from Europe. As the well-known British historian Hugh Trevor Roper argued as late as 1963, there was no African history. "There is only the history of Europeans in Africa. The rest is darkness and darkness is not a subject of history." [42]And advanced and educated Africans shared this view. African states would have to be built by abandoning such tradition as there was, and adopting western cultures wholesale. So Africans joined colonial administrations, as they now work for development agencies, to participate in the development of their countries. They joined colonial police and military organizations, commanded by whites, and based closely on European models, rather than relying on white consultants as they do today. They came to Europe to study, and went back to Africa to implement what they had learned.[43]

But to fully understand the roots of current EU policy, we have to recall that colonial administration was not the whole story; much of the actual transformation of Africa was accomplished by missionaries. Indeed, much of the education and health care of Africans was done by missionaries in the colonial era, as it is now done by NGOs. Missionaries did not only come from the colonial powers, but from countries such as Germany and Sweden, with their strong Protestant tradition of salvation by faith, and the obligation to do good works to demonstrate ones status as part of the elect. The truths which were taught to Africans were universal, and not subject to debate and modification. By definition, they were the same everywhere. Moreover, the transformation which was sought was ethical and moral, rather than practical; The virtuous person would lead a good life, and popular religious literature into the twentieth century was full of improving examples. Missionaries believed they could make people good by preaching at them, much as, say, human rights workers do today. (In reality, of course, no military or police force has ever had a bad human rights record because its members have not been adequately informed about human rights legislation.)

The current projection of the resulting European values to Africa therefore entails a mish-mash of secular and religious traditions, of Protestant and Catholic ways of thinking, and of the traditional sadomasochistic relationship between western certainties and African insecurities. All of it is overlaid on a history of national objectives and rivalries on the continent, institutional conflict, commercial and trade interests, and the political use of Africa to advance European agendas. Unsurprisingly, contemporary European theory and practice is often a haphazard superimposition of all of these factors, mixed with the different objectives and modes of thinking of the institutions which have inherited the traditions of colonial administrators on one hand, and of missionaries on the other. The last point is not a trivial one, as R L Stirrat notes: "there are some remarkable continuities and parallels. A striking characteristic of development personnel is how frequently they are the children of colonial civil servants, military personnel, missionaries and so on." Many children of missionaries also go to work for NGOs.[44] In effect, this is the modern exemplification of the two historic modes of dealing with Africa: mentoring and preaching. It also explains why the West has such problems with the Chinese in Africa, who represent a third mode of dealing with the continent – trade – to which Africans have historically been most receptive, and which in principle supposes a relationship of equals, not a donor-recipient relationship.

We can see this uneasy mixture in a number of areas of EU operation in Africa. Different states put different emphases, publicly and privately, on reasons for EU military operations. For some, it means acting as a great power, for others fulfilling post colonial obligations, for others pursuing

[42] Cited in Makinda and Okumu, *The African Union,* p.14..
[43] See in particular Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden:*
[44] R L Stirrat, "Cultures of Consultancy"

narrower economic and security agendas (immigration, for example). For still others, Europe has a moral duty to help the less fortunate abroad. Likewise, most EU activities under the banner of Security Sector Reform are an uncomfortable mixture of the technical (mentoring) and the normative (preaching), with the same organisation often being required to play both roles. Yet the origins of these two agendas are quite different. The mentoring mode was pioneered by militaries and defence ministries, and more recently by police advisers, and was aimed at technical improvements, better training and organisation and, more recently, an understanding of the challenges of security in a democratic society. It was practised largely by those with long personal experience of the security sector, or at a minimum a good knowledge of it, and some special expertise in areas such as law, procurement or politics. The missionary mode, on the other hand, is reproduced today largely by development ministries and NGOs, which seek to transform the security sector and its personnel by the introduction of new mindsets such as transparency and accountability. Actors tend to come from non-security backgrounds (notably human rights and political science) and to seek changes in the security sector that are normative rather than technical.

In the DRC for example, a recent report notes that "some Member States, including Germany, see Security Sector Reform … first of all as a civilian concept. Therefore, these Member States argue for EUSEC to be managed by CPCC rather than EUMS, as is currently the case."[45] This is only the tip of a huge iceberg of misunderstanding and confusion about SSR, but has to do precisely with this collective inability of Europe to decide whether the subject is essentially about mentoring (experts teaching experts) or missionary activities (civilians preaching to the military), and whether the results sought are primarily practical or normative.

To continue the example, EUSEC DRC currently has four main declared roles. Three of them are essentially about turning the Congolese Armed Forces into an effective force: human resources (including getting soldiers properly paid), training and education, and logistics. These may not be achievable, given that they are directed against the interests of the power structures of the country, but they are coherent, and if successful would produce more security and stability in the country. They are linked, however, with a fourth element, that of human rights, and especially gender-based violence. There is a link, of course, in the sense that unpaid, hungry and poorly-treated troops have historically tended to take out their frustrations on the local population; but it is had not to see, here, the yoking together of very different concepts by an organisation in Brussels that can't quite make up its mind what it thinks it is doing.[46]

IN SEARCH OF TWO CONTINENTS

It will be clear by now that a structured relationship between Africa and Europe is going to be difficult, if for no other reason than that neither continent has a fixed identity, in its own eyes or in those of its nominal partner. Not only does each continent have a multiplicity of ways of presenting itself, but each has an series of different images of the other, constructed out of history, mythology, ignorance, confusion, distrust and very different personal experiences.[47] In addition, Africa retains the varied and contradictory reflexes of a colonised continent, which can include a feeling of cultural inferiority, resentment of the past, suspicion (verging on paranoia) of western intentions, desire for western approval, humiliation as a result of economic and political failure, and many others. For its part, Europe sees Africa not only as a continent of former colonies, but as a failed continent, which has not been able to construct the peace and prosperity that Europeans could. There is no immediately obvious way of overcoming this difficulty. But there are also some severely practical reasons to doubt that the relationship between Africa and Europe will ever work as envisaged in the JAES.

[45] See http://www.isis-europe.org/pdf/February2011EUSECCONGO.pdf
[46] On the involvement of the EU in Security Sector Reform in the DRC, see Melmot, "Candide au Congo:
[47] On western concepts of Africa see Courade, (ed) *L'Afrique des idées reçues*. There is, regrettably, no parallel work on African ideas of the West.

First, it is going to be hard to go beyond the donor recipient relationship when one side remains a donor and the other remains a recipient. To expect a relationship of anything like equals is quite unrealistic, and the imbalance is not only a financial and political one. Whilst the AU has capable people and does good work, it remains true that the EU is much better organised, funded, staffed and resourced than the AU can hope to be in any foreseeable timescale, and its funds come from its own populations. It is also smaller and more homogeneous. In practice, initiatives, proposals and draft documents will almost always come from the European side, whatever formal niceties are observed, and Africans will go along with them for the lack of an obvious alternative. Whilst the difficulties of coordination at 27 are not negligible, the EU has a well-practised system for consultation, and major states have powerful delegations in Brussels to represent them. In Africa, even getting the right person on the telephone can be a challenge in certain countries. Moreover, poor, weak states nervous about threats to their sovereignty, and struggling to manage themselves on a national basis, will not necessarily send their best people to Addis Ababa, or be ready to delegate decision-making to the AU.

Nor is the superficial parallelism of the two organisations borne out by a comparative analysis. We have seen how contingent was the beginning of the European integration process; fear of war and communism persuaded the elites of powerful and wealthy nations to pool elements of national sovereignty in a way which would have been impossible a decade before, and much more difficult a decade later. Nothing in the African experience remotely resembles this progression. Although the AU is not a carbon copy of the EU, it does aspire to a similar image, and its elaborate institutional structure is largely a blend of EU and UN models. But its ambitions (on peace and security in particular) go well beyond what would be acceptable in Europe. In effect, it is trying to play the European game, and establish itself as a powerful collective interlocutor, without the resources and organisation, the historical dynamic and the extensive common history of Europe, and all at a speed and with an ambition, which Europeans would hardly have dared imagine for themselves.

Once again, it is legitimate to wonder whether Africans have too uncritically adopted western models, and whether they have done so out of understandable frustration with the poor image of Africa in the world, and a desire to be taken seriously as an international partner. The problem, of course, is that what matters is implementation rather than institutions. The AU has not been slow to produce declarations and policy documents, and indeed has many skilled and experienced diplomats and other government officials. But its ability to actually perform is essentially a question of the capabilities of individual states, and there the problems are well enough known not to need emphasising.

The continued viability of the AU as a partner for the EU depends ultimately on two assumptions. The first is that it is possible to create a strong organisation out of weak states with generally poor capability. The second is that the AU's nation-state based approach to security, imitated from the structures and mind-sets of the EU and the UN, is relevant to Africa problems. Neither is self-evidently true. The Constitutive Act of the AU (Article 4(d)) seeks to create a Common Defence Policy (something which has been beyond the capacity of the EU) and to "defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States" (Article 3(b)). In reality, no African state actually has forces of the size and capability to perform these functions, even for its own territory, let alone for others. The same applies to the reverse of the coin, where the Union has the right to "intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity" (Article 4(h)). Again, with the limited and partial exception of the inconclusive Nigerian-led interventions in Sierra Leone and Liberia, African states have never had the capability to do this unaided. In reality, therefore the AU will continue to be dependent on outside assistance, normally from Europe, if it is to fulfil even part of these extremely ambitious objectives. In turn, as Cedric de Coning noted as early as 2002, in such circumstances donors "can determine the duration of a mission, and can influence a mission's mandate by placing terms and conditions on continued funding, or by withdrawing funding if they no longer

agree with the scope of the mission."[48] Together with the massive technical assistance from Europe intended to get the APSA operational, this has led to a "creeping Westernisation of African security efforts" and an international community which has "abused Africa's dependence on foreign aid in order to shape the emerging security structures to their liking."[49] In the simplest of terms, no EU/AU discussion about a security problem in Africa can ever be equal, because the EU can affect the African ability to respond by granting or withholding its assistance.

What this means in practice is that Africa's view of its priorities will ultimately be the same as Europe's. Summit declarations (which cover, after all, more than just security) will be largely drafted by Europeans, and will say things about Africa that Africans will then find hard to unsay, for example within the AU. It is not necessarily being conspiratorial to suggest that the EU finds the JAES congenial because it enables the Europeans to manage Africa as a bloc – to treat it once more "as one", and to then bind it to public positions which African states will have to live with subsequently. Likewise, the extension of the dialogue to that conveniently vague entity "civil society" will in practice further weaken the position of African governments. Civil society, or more properly civil society groups, tend to be organised by educated elites, and such groups require money. In Africa, this money comes essentially from donors. It is a matter of pragmatic fact that foreign governments find it easier to deal with civil society than with governments, because in the end governments have to be accountable to their people, but civil society groups (and NGOs, with which they tend to be creatively confused) are accountable only to their donors. It is therefore possible to imagine the formation of elite Euro-African partnerships, over the heads, and behind the backs, of elected governments and those they represent.

Whether the situation was intended or not, the EU is now effectively in a position to dictate the AU's security policy by stealth. That which it is prepared to fund stands a chance of happening; that which it will not fund will be far more difficult. This means that AU priorities are highly likely to be those incidents of concern to western media and political elites (eg Darfur and Somalia), and not necessarily those of the most intrinsic importance. A suggestion that a proposed operation will be funded if launched may be enough to ensure that the idea is adopted by the AU. The APSA's operational arm, the African Standby Force, late as it is, will only ever really be deployable with European funding. Its very structure – patterned after light, European-style multinational brigades – is a good example of the unconscious appropriation of western ideas by Africans which has been so much a feature of the last century or so. Indeed, its structure recalls the military forces of the colonial and immediate post-colonial era, with the exception that the advisers are retired, rather than serving, white military officers.

To say this is, once more, not to fall victim to conspiracy thinking. The situation described is normal when a strong group interacts with a weak one, and Africans have not helped themselves by being slow to come up with counter-proposals and alternatives. There is no reason to doubt that the EU really would like Africans to take "ownership" of some of these issues, and that it wishes, as far as possible to avoid dictating terms. But practical relationships of power, and historic African diffidence, make this very difficult, even on practical issues such as force structures and tasks, where Africans might be thought to deserve a decisive voice.

A real partnership is even more difficult on non-technical issues. EU and African positions on wider strategic issues, even those that there is a will to tackle, are often far apart. Thus, the two may have "shared issues but not necessarily shared interests."[50] Africa has in practice expressed grave doubts about the western peace and security agenda, as witness the marked lack of enthusiasm to host the new US Africa Command, which remains in Germany. Likewise, African officials are quite frank in private that they fear that the western "war on terror" agenda will simply bring conflict to parts of Africa which are currently peaceful, and there is some indication that this may already be happening.

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[48] de Coning, ."Peacekeeping in Africa: The Next Decade.".
[49] Esmenjaud and Franke, "Who Owns African Ownership? pp. 22-3.
[50] Sherriff and Magalhaes Ferreira, "Between the Summits"

More generally, it is observable that, for Africans, issues of the reform of the international political and financial systems are the major priorities, and on this it seems unlikely that the West, including Europe, will give any essential ground. So long as this immobilism continues, Africa will be locked into a donor-recipient relationship, even if the actors politely call it something else. It is no wonder that Africans argue that "Africa would not need aid if certain steps could be taken to prevent it being exploited both by domestic and international actors … Poverty is not the natural condition of the continent."[51] African frustration on these issues can only become more intense, and it is not clear that a younger generation of African politicians and intellectuals will accept this situation so readily.

Yet , in the short term at least, African politicians who express this frustration will not make themselves popular. Rather, the JAES is likely to reinforce the historical tendency for African elites to identify more with the West, and with western ways of thinking and acting, and ultimately western agendas as well. The first generation of African leaders was, after all, educated in Europe or in missionary schools and universities in Africa, and saw its role as bringing advanced western ideas to Africa. Little has changed since, but there is now a real risk that the JAES will institutionalise the Europeanisation of African elites: not just politicians, but government officials, the media and civil society. In turn, this may actually promote domestic conflict. One of the reasons Laurent Gbagbo was so successful for so long in defending his position in the Cote d'Ivoire was that he managed to paint his opponent, Alassane Ouattara, not only as a western-educated former IMF official (which is true) but as a puppet for western interests seeking to control the country.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS?

A further problem is that even in the narrower area of crisis management, with which this paper is concerned, it is not clear that the JAES is asking the right questions. In the late 1990s, when thought was first being given to a Europe-Africa relationship, it seemed obvious that Africa was a theatre of endemic conflict. It was not yet clear that the peaceful transitions in Mozambique and South Africa would endure, Angola was mired in an apparently eternal civil war, the conflict that had wracked Sudan since independence showed no signs of concluding, seven nations were involved in the war in the DRC, and Sierra Leone and Liberia were in violent chaos. Scarcely a decade later, all of these problems have either been resolved or considerably ameliorated, and Africa is no longer really synonymous with conflict. Indeed, it is a region of relative peace compared to the Middle East and South Asia, which currently host two wars of appalling violence and a number of dangerous political crises.

This is not to say that universal peace has arrived in Africa, of course. It is still unclear what the long-term consequences of the vote for independence in South Sudan will be, and Somalia remains an intractable problem. But as old conflicts have died down they have not been replaced by new ones. The long-running crisis in the Côte d'Ivoire has really been an extended episode of political violence, not a true civil war. Burundi has stubbornly refused to follow Rwanda over the brink into socio-economic conflict. Africa's security problems have not all vanished, but they no longer define the continent in the way they once did.

Moreover, little of this progress has anything to do with the APSA – or more precisely, the APSA, where it is invoked, has essentially been political decoration. The Angolan war ended when the US betrayed its long-time ally Savimbi, and the fighting in the Sudan was concluded with the foreign-brokered Comprehensive Peace Agreement. British intervention stopped the fighting in Sierra Leone. By contrast, the Ouagadougou Accords, which opened the way for negotiations in the Côte d'Ivoire, were produced by the Ivoirian parties to the conflict themselves. Indeed, the most important single factor in the reduction in violence in Africa has been a change in the behaviour of outside powers. Much of the early violence was directly or indirectly related to de-colonialisation, and much of what followed to its consequences. The West backed various African leaders for ideological reasons (Savimbi, Buthelezi, Mobutu, Kagame) often because they said positive things about the West. They

[51] Murithi, *The African Union*, p.140.

demonised others (Lumumba, Ghadaafi, Mugabe, Bashir) for the opposite reason.[52] Without active western support, fighting in Mozambique and Angola would have come to an end much earlier than it did. Even western lack of action was significant, notably in the DRC, where financial pressure could easily have forced Rwanda and Uganda to abandon their invasion, and might have saved millions of lives.

The point of this is not to attribute blame, but rather to note that much of the violence in Africa has depended on external and temporary factors, which appear to be coming to an end. If western governments still demonise some leaders (Gbagbo, Bashir) they no longer seek to remove them violently, or to arm their enemies. Likewise, they appear to be becoming tired even of Kagame. Africa is a great deal more stable as a result. Yet at the same time, some important causes of violence in Africa are effectively beyond treatment, because they are inherent in the post-colonial structure of the country. The African security dilemma can be summarised in two sentences. On independence, the new states were left with territory that they did not have the resources to control. This lack of control produced insecurity, which prevented growth, which meant that the resources required for control never appeared, which promoted further insecurity. There are potential solutions to this dilemma, but it is doubtful if they are politically viable.[53] Indeed, the security problems of some countries, such as Nigeria or Sudan, are inherent in the design of the countries themselves. In Sudan, for example, where the struggle between the centre and the periphery goes back to colonial times, the APSA will, at best, only be able to deal with symptoms. The problems themselves are intractable.[54]

Finally, much depends on how we understand violence. Here, it is useful to follow Slavoj Zizek's distinction between "subjective" and "objective" violence.[55] Subjective violence is what we see, perpetrate or experience, the kind of thing that makes us look up from the TV and demand that "something must be done". But as Zizek argues, this often acts to disguise objective violence – the violence inherent in systems of control and the maintenance of order. The whole of the colonial period was one of objective violence, of violence threatened or used to reinforce a political order, and African leaders learnt this lesson well. Most violence today in Africa is "objective" in this sense: it means insecurity, fear, being a victim of predatory states, unpaid security forces and militias, and criminal gangs of different sorts. By definition, the APSA, even with support from the EU, cannot address these issues, any more than it can resolve the underlying structural problems of African states.

Does this mean that the JAES will be abandoned? Certainly not, because one does not admit failure in such a high-profile initiative. But in addition, the JAES has a series of advantages for the West which are independent of any benefit to Africans themselves. Whether these advantages were deliberately sought at the start, or whether they have arisen by accident, is not the issue here. First, as already noted, the rules of the JAES as written greatly favour Europe, whose greater resources and cohesion mean that it will always dominate the debate. As anyone who has ever organised important and sensitive meetings knows, control of the agenda provides an enormous advantage, and, in practice, the superior organisation of Europeans will generally ensure that they retain this position. Thus, the perception of African security problems, as well as their possible solutions, will be driven much more from Brussels than from Addis. Second, this dominance will greatly influence the perception of what Africa's problems are as a whole, and the relative importance of security as opposed to, say, health or trade. Any objective survey of Africa would have to include, for example, that disease and malnutrition are far greater problems than war and conflict. According to the World Health Organisation, one million Africans die of malaria each year, the vast majority children under five. Infant mortality is much higher than anywhere else in the world: in 2005, 43 out of every 1000 babies

[52] de Witte, *L'Assassinat de Lumumba* is based on Belgian and UN records and records the paranoid, almost hysterical western suspicion of the Congolese leader as a new Hitler intent on spreading chaos throughout Africa.
[53] See for example Chuter "Feeling Good or Getting Better: Options for Security and Development in Africa"
[54] See Johnson, *The Root Causes of Sudan's Civil Wars,* and also Mamdani, *Saviours and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror*,
[55] Zizek, *Violence: Six Sideways Glances*

died before they were a month old. More than 200,000 women die in childbirth each year. It is not hard to understand these kinds of figures when we read that only one third of Africans have access to sanitation, and scarcely 60% to clean drinking water.[56] Health was not mentioned in the 2010 Summit communiqué.

Third, as already noted, the AU and African states are poorly resourced. Time spent preparing for and working with the EU is time away from anything else. A large and ambitious joint programme has the practical effect of making dialogues with other organisations and states much more difficult, and so relatively enhancing the EU's influence in Africa. Finally, the extension of the dialogue to alleged issues of common concern also has advantages for the EU. In practice, these issues are disproportionately likely to be identified by the Europeans, for the reasons given above. Few African states have the capacity, or even the interest, to argue about the Iranian nuclear programme, for example, whatever they may privately feel. A joint position on the issue will almost certainly be based on proposals made by Europe, which Africans will thereafter feel bound to support in other fora, such as the General Assembly of the UN. Europeans have historically felt less constrained by such common positions, nor would they permit any position they brought to an Africa-EU Summit to be substantially modified by African comments. Finally, of course, issues of "common interest" would not include internal European issues, even though many of those are of crucial importance to Africa. The biggest story in Europe at the time of the Tripoli Summit (and one of the biggest in the world) was the political and financial crisis in Ireland, but there is no indication that this was discussed, or even alluded to. The cumulative effect of these factors is that African countries will be constrained, across a very large range of issues, to adopt public positions heavily influenced by the views of the West. Ironically, an organisation intended to strengthen Africa collectively is likely to wind up doing precisely the opposite.

It can be argued, of course, that international politics is always like this. Behind the façade of state equality, some states are always more equal than others, and no one supposes that, in the Security Council, for example, all states carry equal weight. But the EU-Africa relationship is different. Here, 27 states with a quarter of the world' wealth will, in effect, dominate the thinking and much of the policies of twice that number of states, mostly desperately poor. Not even during the colonial era was there such organised tutelage of Africa by Europe. It is perfectly true, of course that European states are not consciously trying to recreate empires. No doubt, in Brussels and in national capitals, officials would be horrified at any such suggestion. They certainly feel themselves to be acting in Africa's best interests, as well as Europe's. Nonetheless, the final outcome is likely to be a policy which on the one hand is not particularly operationally effective, but on the other breeds political resentment.

Finally, many of the staff and much of the budget for the EAS will come from the Commission. In the current economic crisis, member states are cutting back their overseas aid and representation, and will in any case be reluctant to send their best people to work for an untested new organisation, rather than in a bilateral Embassy. The Commission has a corporate identity and unified set of political objectives, as well as the long-term strategy of a permanent organisation, none of which can be matched by a collection of nations. In practice, therefore, it is likely that the Commission will succeed in taking a disproportionate share of the best jobs, and gain an advantage, possible a decisive one, in the twenty-year struggle for influence of the EU's foreign and security policy whose origins were described earlier. However, the Commission's historic inability (at least in theory) to address harder security issues means that it does not have a ready-made cadre of security experts to deal with African security issues, and so is likely to have to rely, as it does now, on contractual staff. Major states are unlikely to view all this with equanimity, and will no doubt seek to obstruct the work of the

[56] See World Health Organisation, *Facts about Health in the African Region of WHO*, online at **http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs314/en/index.html**

EAS where it conflicts with their national objectives. If not sensitively handled, the initiative could result in a further layer of complexity, and more confusion for Africans. Is there another option?

ANOTHER OPTION

It is true, of course, as EU officials point out, that the JAES is not intended to be the whole story, or to preclude bilateral and other relationships, although its ambitious and all-embracing rhetoric can often give precisely that impression. Indeed, there is some evidence that other and more modest models of cooperation can work better. One example is the so-called "5 plus 5" group, consisting of Algeria, France, Italy, Libya, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia. It is an informal discussion forum, essentially a sub-set of the EU-Mediterranean dialogue, which brings together states that are geographically close and have common problems to discuss. It has been largely successful, in a deliberately low-key manner. Likewise, there are many security problems in Africa that cross REC boundaries, and which consist of a complex mixture of migration, criminality, smuggling, resource conflicts and the difficulty of controlling large areas of sparsely inhabited territory. One such area is the Sahel, the arid area between the Sahara and the Sudan, which does not fit neatly into any geographical or political framework. Here, the EU has shown some vision. The EU has been attempting to define and implement an assistance strategy for several years now, and there does seem to be genuine recognition of the need for cooperation between the Commission and the Council, with their various political and financial resources.[57] It is not too much to hope that this could be a model for an added value that the EAS might be capable of supplying, if some of the above-mentioned difficulties can be overcome. It is also true that not all crises in Africa are divisive: there has been a large measure of agreement over Somalia, for example.[58]

What these rather disparate examples have in common is that they are not constrained by the formal structures of the APSA and the JAES, and they deal with questions that go beyond the artificial borders of the RECs. They bring together groups of states that perceive common problems, and participation is voluntary. All of the players have a degree of expertise in the questions being discussed. Whilst the political momentum of the JAES process is too great to be halted, for the reasons reviewed at some length above, it is unlikely to bring with it a large number of practical achievements. In general, the more limited and focused the grouping, the more limited the agenda, the higher the chances of some successful output. We can see this from the relative success of the Lomé Accords, which mainly limited themselves to issues of common interest, where discussions could in theory lead to productive outcomes. By contrast, the Cotonou process has been much less focused, and has been loaded down with other issues, such as "governance" and human rights. In fact, the pattern by which African security problems cross not only frontiers, but also tidy boundaries of RECs, is very common, and it is arguable that ad hoc groupings of European and African states to attempt to address them in a focused way should be the norm, rather than the exception.

In general, complex arrangements between large groupings seldom work well. Nor do very ambitious initiatives that depend on a high level of expertise on both sides. So the EU has indicated its willingness to work with the new government of South Sudan, and in principle that is to be applauded. But Sudan is also a warning about the dangers of over-complex arrangements. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 was nothing if not comprehensive. At 250 pages, including detailed technical annexes, it was negotiated under the tutelage of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development Partners' Forum, consisting of every major European nation, the United States, and various international organisations including the European Commission. It can plausibly be argued that the Agreement was far too complex actually to ever have been properly implemented, and was thus, in practice, destabilising Certainly, personal observation suggests that the SPLA/M side had

[57] See Toussaint, "Vers un partenariat euro-sahélien de sécurité et de développement",

[58] See for example "Council conclusions on Somalia », 3076th Foreign Affairs Council meeting Brussels, 21 March 2011, available at http://eeas.europa.eu/somalia/index_en.htm

great difficulty finding enough good quality people to be Ministers and advisers in Khartoum, and to service the endless working groups and commissions which the Agreement called for. In the end, frustration with the process, and at being constantly outmanoeuvred by the Khartoum government, probably contributed as much to the strategic decision of the SPLA/M to go for independence, as did the death of John Garang, the charismatic leader whose "New Sudan" would have remained a single country with a fairer distribution of power between Khartoum and the regions.

The risk is that the new government, whose capability remains, frankly, limited, will be swamped with offers of help from various conflicting sources, which will exceed its powers to assess, let alone use intelligently. This is perhaps a useful moment to remind ourselves of one salient fact, that Africa is, in essence, our creation. European colonialism, followed by the linkages of the Cold War, and the involvement of international organisations and donors since, have had infinitely more impact on the structure, institutions and functioning of Africa and its states than all of the efforts of Africans for the last century put together. From this we can plausibly deduce that, if African states and institutions do not work very well, it is perhaps because they are based on foreign ideas transplanted into unpromising soil. In fact, the majority at the moment holds the opposite view: that Africa's problems can be cured by more and better initiatives based on external models, with external advisors to explain how they should work One can only feel that, if such a model were capable of succeeding, it would have done so at some point in the last hundred years. No-one can say it has not been given a chance.

The conclusions that might flow from such a judgement are largely beyond the scope of this paper. But it can surely be concluded that the best thing the EU, and the new EAS, can do, is to be careful and targeted in its involvement. It should try to avoid the temptation to get involved just because others are, and ask itself critically what it can usefully add to whatever is being done. Neither the missionary, nor the colonial administrator, is necessarily always a welcome visitor, and the results of European efforts at bringing peace and security to Africa, at different times over many generations, are at the least equivocal. It may even be, heretically, that in certain cases it will appear that the best and most useful thing the EU can do is nothing.

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