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Kartsonaki, Argyro; Wolff, Stefan

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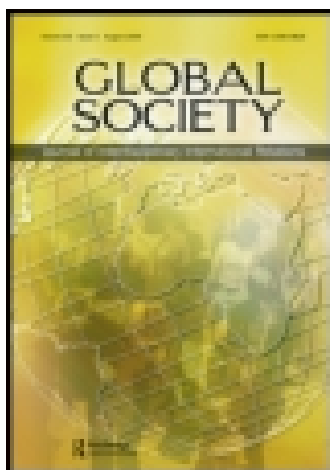
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The EU's Responses to Conflicts in its Wider Neighbourhood: Human or European Security?

ARGYRO KARTSONAKI and STEFAN WOLFF

The conflicts in the EU's wider neighbourhood, within and between the "neighbours' neighbours", have been on the EU's foreign and security policy agenda for some time and offer a useful set of cases to examine rival claims in the existing literature about the extent to which the EU's foreign and security policy is driven by human or European security imperatives. In order to understand how and why the EU has responded to these conflicts, we initially present an overview of all conflicts among and between the neighbours' neighbours, broken down first by sub-region and then by conflict type. We then discuss the EU's responses to these conflicts and offer a comparative analysis, with a view to describing and explaining existing variation in terms of the EU's responses and their impact. We find that the Union's response is most in line with a human security approach in relation to those conflicts where it perceives to have the greatest interests at stake.

Introduction

The EU and its predecessors have had their fair share of conflict-related security challenges to deal with over the past six decades. While there has been no violent conflict between its member states, conflicts within member states have been, and continue to be, sources of instability. Northern Ireland and the Basque country, Corsica and South Tyrol are among the illustrative examples, with the case of Cyprus/Northern Cyprus perhaps the one that demonstrates most vividly the limitations of the EU to facilitate sustainable conflict settlements within its own boundaries. Moreover, such issues are not confined to the past as the heated debates over independence referenda in Scotland and Catalonia vividly demonstrate.

Beyond the member states, violent conflicts in the Western Balkans throughout the 1990s were high on the EU agenda then, and the Union remains heavily engaged in managing that region's various conflict-related problems.¹ The countries of the southern and eastern neighbourhood, too, have experienced significant levels of conflict that have posed a challenge to the EU as it pursues its goal of a stable and secure neighbourhood.² In the southern dimension of the

1. Annemarie Peen Rodt and Stefan Wolff, "European Union Conflict Management in the Western Balkans", *Civil Wars*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (2012), pp. 414–430.

2. Nathalie Tocci, *The EU's Role in Conflict Resolution: Promoting Peace in the European Neighbourhood* (London: Routledge, 2007).

European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), longstanding conflicts like those in the Western Sahara and the Israeli-Palestinian/Arab-Israeli conflicts remain on the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and ENP agendas, alongside the more recent conflicts that emerged during and in the aftermath of the Arab Spring in North Africa (especially in Libya and Egypt) and the protracted and spreading Syrian civil war.³ In the eastern dimension, the so-called frozen conflicts in the successor states of the Soviet Union (e.g., Moldova/Transnistria) and most recently the crisis in Ukraine have also seen a good deal of EU involvement in efforts to find viable solutions.⁴

A significant body of literature has emerged over the past two decades that has engaged with the EU as a security actor, and for the past 10 years a more specific sub-field in this wider area has analysed the role of the EU as a conflict manager. While a vast number of studies have considered a variety of aspects of EU conflict management by focusing on individual cases or offering comparative perspectives,⁵ no systematic analysis exists so far that considers the EU's role as a conflict manager in the geographical area of its wider neighbourhood. This is somewhat surprising as conflicts within and between the "neighbours' neighbours" have been on the EU's foreign and security policy agenda for some time, both in a direct sense of threats to be dealt with and in a more indirect way because of their impact on the geographically closer neighbourhood.

In addressing this gap, we adopt a comparative approach to the EU's responses to conflicts in its wider neighbourhood. Comparative research into conflicts and their (external) management can approach its subject matter in a variety of different ways. Cases can be selected, categorised and analysed in relation to factors specific to the conflict (parties, intensity, duration, issue of disagreement, etc.), its geographic location, the type of intervention (economic, diplomatic, military, etc.) or the intervening actor/s (states, coalitions of states, regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), individuals). This choice is obviously dependent on the type of question that research seeks to answer. In our case, we are interested in

3. Toby Dodge and Emile Hokayem (eds.), *Middle Eastern Security, the US Pivot, and the Rise of Isis* (Adelphi Book 447) (London: IISS/Routledge, 2014).

4. Amanda Akçakoca et al., *After Georgia: Conflict Resolution in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood* (Brussels: European Policy Centre, 2009); Richard G. Whitman and Stefan Wolff, "The EU as a Conflict Manager? The Case of Georgia and Its Implications", *International Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 1 (2010), pp. 87–107.

5. For example, Fraser Cameron, *The EU and International Organisations: Partners in Crisis Management* (Brussels: European Policy Centre, 2005); Bruno Charbonneau, "What Is So Special about the European Union? EU–UN Cooperation in Crisis Management in Africa", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (2009), pp. 546–561; Laure Delcour, "The European Union, a Security Provider in the Eastern Neighbourhood?", *European Security*, Vol. 19, No. 4 (2010), pp. 535–549; Thomas Diez, Stephan Stetter and Mathias Albert, "The European Union and Border Conflicts: The Transformative Power of Integration", *International Organization*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (2006), pp. 563–593; Bastian Giegerich, "EU Crisis Management: Ambitions and Achievements", *The Adelphi Papers*, Vol. 48, No. 397 (2008), pp. 15–34; Gorm Rye Olsen, "The EU and Conflict Management in African Emergencies", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (2002), pp. 87–102; Gwendolyn Sasse, "The European Neighbourhood Policy and Conflict Management: A Comparison of Moldova and the Caucasus", *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (2009), pp. 369–386; Nathalie Tocci, "Conflict Resolution in the Neighbourhood: Comparing EU Involvement in Turkey's Kurdish Question and in the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict", *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2005), pp. 125–146; Richard Whitman and Stefan Wolff (eds.), *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager* (London: Routledge, 2012); Whitman and Wolff, "The EU as a Conflict Manager?", *op. cit.*

violent conflict⁶ within and between states in a specific, pre-determined geographic region and a single intervening actor.⁷

This geographic 'pre-determination' of our empirical material clearly defines our choice of cases, but also creates an opportunity to structure and organise our analysis in a way that can contribute new knowledge and understanding of the underlying drivers of the EU's foreign and security policy. Here, a longstanding debate pits advocates of the human security approach against more traditional realists of various persuasions.⁸ Much existing work in this area is focused on single or few case studies⁹ or a single region,¹⁰ or assesses civilian and/or military EU operations as a whole,¹¹ but no cross-regional comparison as carried out here exists to our knowledge. We can thus not only investigate broader claims about underlying drivers of EU foreign and security policy but also offer insights into whether the

6. We define violent conflict as the sustained and strategic use of violence by organised actors to defend or change an existing status quo.

7. We do not claim that the EU is a homogeneous actor or that all its institutions and member states have identical interests in relation to conflict management in the wider neighbourhood as this term is used here. But we are concerned with EU policies and their impact, rather than with the (EU-internal) process of policy making that involves often complex negotiations among representatives of the member states and EU institutions. On EU actorness, including in relation to EU external action, see, for example, Jolyon Howorth, "Decision-Making in Security and Defense Policy: Towards Supranational Inter-Governmentalism?", *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 47, No. 4 (2012), pp. 433–453; Jörg Monar, "The EU's Externalisation of Internal Security Objectives: Perspectives after Lisbon and Stockholm", *The International Spectator*, Vol. 45, No. 2 (2010), pp. 23–39; Arne Niemann and Charlotte Bretherton, "EU External Policy at the Crossroads: The Challenge of Actorness and Effectiveness", *International Relations*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (2013), pp. 261–275; Thomas Risse, "Identity Matters: Exploring the Ambivalence of EU Foreign Policy", *Global Policy*, Vol. 3 (2012), pp. 87–95.

8. Cf. George Christou, "The European Union's Human Security Discourse: Where Are We Now?", *European Security*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (2014), pp. 364–381; Karen Del Biondo, "Norms or Interests? Explaining Instrumental Variation in EU Democracy Promotion in Africa", *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* Vol. 53, No. 2 (2015), pp. 237–254; Richard Youngs, "Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests in the EU's External Identity", *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2004), pp. 415–435.

9. For example, Alina Christova, "Seven Years of EUJUST LEX: The Challenge of Rule of Law in Iraq", *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (2012), pp. 424–439; Hylke Dijkstra, "The Military Operation of the EU in Chad and the Central African Republic: Good Policy, Bad Politics", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2010), pp. 395–407; David Styan, "EU Power and Armed Humanitarianism in Africa: Evaluating ESDP in Chad", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, Vol. 25, No. 4 (2012) 651–668; Whitman and Wolff, "The EU as a Conflict Manager?", *op. cit.*

10. For example, Gordon Crawford, "EU Human Rights and Democracy Promotion in Central Asia: From Lofty Principles to Lowly Self-Interests", *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (2008), pp. 172–191; Per M. Norheim-Martinsen, "The EU in Africa: Peacebuilding by Proxy" (Oslo: Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, 2013); Norheim-Martinsen, "Our Work Here Is Done: European Union Peacekeeping in Africa", *African Security Review*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (2011), pp. 17–28; Gorm Rye Olsen, "The EU and Military Conflict Management in Africa: For the Good of Africa or Europe?", *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (2009), pp. 245–260; Annemarie Peen Rodt and Jide Martyns Okeke, "AU–EU 'Strategic Partnership': Strengthening Policy Convergence and Regime Efficacy in the African Peace and Security Complex?", *African Security*, Vol. 6, Nos. 3–4 (2013), pp. 211–233.

11. For example, Bastian Giegerich, "Military and Civilian Capabilities for EU-Led Crisis-Management Operations", *Adelphi Series*, Vol. 50, No. 414 (2010), pp. 41–58; Giovanni Grevi, Damien Helly and Daniel Keohane (eds.), *European Security and Defence Policy: The First Ten Years* (Paris: EU Institute for Security Studies, 2009); Mary Martin and Taylor Owen, "The Second Generation of Human Security: Lessons from the UN and EU Experience", *International Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 1 (2010), pp. 211–224; Whitman and Wolff, *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager*, *op. cit.*

increasing regional differentiation in this area of EU policy also implies a difference in underlying drivers.¹²

The literature on EU foreign and security policy offers different conceptualisations of “drivers”, variously seeing them as actors (e.g., individual member states with a specific agenda), the underlying motivations that these actors are said to have (e.g., desires for security) or as structures that “compel” the EU to undertake certain actions (e.g., the international trade system). These are not mutually exclusive conceptions of drivers; rather, they operate, interact and compete at different levels.¹³ Our own use of “drivers” is primarily that of motivations, and we distinguish between a norms-driven and a utility-driven EU policy¹⁴ in the wider neighbourhood. This maps onto the distinction we draw in the title of our article between a norms-driven policy informed by the human security approach and a utility-driven policy that seeks greater European security in the sense of greater security for the EU and its citizens and member states. This is not to argue that such a European security focus does not have its own normative underpinnings or to suggest that the definition of norms at EU level is not, in part, a reflection of member states’ interests,¹⁵ but to engage with an established debate¹⁶ on whether the EU is a normative power,¹⁷ i.e., an actor who has the ability to project the norms of peace, liberty, rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and make them part of an internationally accepted conception of normal.¹⁸ In fact, as we argue below, the pursuit of European security is perfectly compatible with a human security approach, and it appears from our study that the EU applies a human security approach, albeit predominantly in an instrumental way, in particular in those areas where it also has the strongest security interests of its own.

In order to offer an empirically and analytically useful examination of the EU’s responses to conflicts in the wider neighbourhood and of the variations in the

12. The idea of cross-regional comparisons in security studies goes back to Barry Buzan’s concept of the regional security complex (Barry Buzan, “New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-First Century”, *International Affairs*, Vol. 67, No. 3 (1991)), pp. 431–451 and was further developed in D.A. Lake and P.M. Morgan, *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World* (State College: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997) and Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). See also Stefan Wolff, “The Regional Dimensions of State Failure”, *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 3 (2011), pp. 951–972.

13. For example, Michael Smith, “The Framing of European Foreign and Security Policy: Towards a Post-Modern Policy Framework?”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (2003), p. 566, argues that “three specific ‘drivers’ or motivations” exist for European foreign policy, namely “the search for legitimacy; the interests of member states; and the demand for environmental stabilisation”, and that these, in turn, “interact with the three layers of ... ideas, institutions, and policy”.

14. Gergana Noutcheva, “Fake, Partial and Imposed Compliance: The Limits of the EU’s Normative Power in the Western Balkans”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 16, No. 7 (2009), pp. 1065–1084.

15. Thomas Diez, “Normative Power as Hegemony”, *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (2013), pp. 194–210.

16. Sandra Lavenex, “EU External Governance in ‘Wider Europe’”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (2004), pp. 680–700; Noutcheva, *op. cit.*; Sarah Wolff, Nicole Wichmann and Gregory Mounier, “The External Dimension of Justice and Home Affairs: A Different Security Agenda for the EU?”, *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2008), pp. 9–23.

17. Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe Reconsidered: Beyond the Crossroads”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (2006), pp. 182–199; Manners, “European Union ‘Normative Power’ and the Security Challenge”, *European Security*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (2006) 405–421.

18. Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 2 (2002), pp. 235–258.

EU's policies and their impact on the ground, we proceed as follows. After a brief discussion of our analytical framework, we present an overview of all conflicts among and between the neighbours' neighbours. This overview is broken down first by sub-region (Sahel, sub-Saharan Africa Middle East, Central Asia) because the EU structures much of its foreign and security policy on the basis of increasingly regional differentiation and the development of regional strategies.¹⁹ Second, we consider the different types of conflict that the EU is confronted with, based on insights from the conflict management literature. Here we consider whether conflicts occur within or between states. Among intra-state conflicts, we identify three principal, albeit often overlapping, types of conflict—territorial (secessionist or autonomist); regime (religious or ethnic); and inter-communal (sectarian or resource competition). Inter-state conflicts, of which there are significantly fewer, are either disputes over borders, territory or resources. In a third step, we map the EU's responses to these conflicts, focusing on the policies that the Union has applied in different cases, from a range of humanitarian assistance programmes to civilian and military CSDP missions.²⁰ On the basis of this descriptive overview, we then offer a comparative analysis to identify and explain existing variation in terms of EU responses to conflicts in the wider neighbourhood, finding that the EU adopts elements of the human security approach most consistently in cases where it can also be considered to have significant security interests of its own. This suggests an instrumental use of the human security approach in pursuit of European security interests and also offers an explanation for the fact that the human security approach is less in evidence in those cases where the Union's own security interests have been less at stake.

Human or European Security: Determining the Principles of EU Foreign and Security Policy

The concept of human security has its origins in academic and policy debates stretching back to the 1990s that sought to take account of a range of initially disparate trends in security studies and practice, including a basic human needs approach, increasingly humanitarian interventionist foreign policies, a focus on development as part of security, and the rise of so-called non-traditional security issues.²¹ While at times questioned in terms of its utility as both an analytical

19. The relevant regional strategies in our context are the EU's Sahel Strategy, European External Action Service, "Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel" (Brussels: European External Action Service, 2011) and Central Asia Strategy, European Commission, "European Community Regional Strategy Paper for Assistance to Central Asia for the Period 2007–2013" (Brussels: European Commission, 2007); European Council, "Strategy Paper 2002–2006 & Indicative Programme 2002–2004 for Central Asia" (Brussels: European Council, 2002).

20. As of 31 July 2014, in the relevant area of the wider neighbourhood, the EU had ongoing civilian missions in Mali, Niger and Libya and a military mission in Mali. Completed civilian missions in the wider neighbourhood include Iraq (2005–2013) and South Sudan (2012–2014). A single military mission was completed in Chad/Central African Republic (CAR) (2008–2009). A combined civilian-military mission was undertaken in support of the African Union's enhanced Mission to Sudan/Darfur (2005–2006).

21. For a summary, see Edward Newman, "Human Security and Constructivism", *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (2001), pp. 239–251.

concept and a practical guide for policy makers,²² the concept has remained significant in the context of continuing debates over the role of the European Union as an international security actor. As we outline in the following paragraphs, human security as conceptualised by Kaldor, Martin and Selchow²³ provides a useful analytical lens through which the debate over whether EU foreign and security policy is primarily driven by interests or norms and values²⁴ can be approached. This debate, and in particular the question over the compatibility of the human security approach with one that is focused on the EU's own security needs, is at the core of our study on EU responses to conflict in the wider neighbourhood.

The human security approach to EU foreign and security policy has its origins in the wake of the publication of the European Union's first security strategy²⁵ when the Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities put forward a report advocating a human security doctrine for Europe.²⁶ Subsequently, the study group's convener, Mary Kaldor, and two of her colleagues followed up on this report with a publication arguing that "[h]uman security could be considered a 'bridging concept' between the immediate need for stabilization and the need, simultaneously and over the long term, to address ... structural conditions".²⁷ As a guide for policy, a human security approach to the EU's foreign and security policy would thus entail five principles: respect for human rights, the establishment of legitimate political authority in countries the EU engages with through its foreign and security policy, multilateralism as a counterweight to possible neo-colonial tendencies, a bottom-up approach that takes note of local needs and interests, and finally a regional focus that looks beyond just the country in question.²⁸ The following year, the "Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy" noted confidently that "[w]e have worked to build human security, by reducing poverty and inequality, promoting good governance and human rights, assisting development, and addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity".²⁹ While this may not actually reflect any real commitment by the EU to a foreign and security policy guided by the concept of human security, "the principles that underpin

22. Edward Newman, "Critical Human Security Studies", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2010), pp. 77–94; Roland Paris, "Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?", *International Security*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2001), pp. 87–102.

23. Mary Kaldor, Mary Martin and Sabine Selchow, "Human Security: A New Strategic Narrative for Europe", *International Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 2 (2007), pp. 273–288.

24. Del Biondo, *op. cit.*; Jolyon Howorth, "The EU as a Global Actor: Grand Strategy for a Global Grand Bargain?", *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (2010), pp. 455–474; Manners, "Normative Power", *op. cit.*; Manners, "European Union 'Normative Power'", *op. cit.*; Richard Youngs, "Fusing Security and Development: Just Another Euro-Platitude?", *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (2008) 419–437; Youngs, "Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests", *op. cit.*

25. Council of the European Union, "A Secure Europe in a Better World. European Security Strategy" (Brussels: Council of the European Union, 2003).

26. Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities, "A Human Security Doctrine for Europe" (Barcelona: Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities, 2004). Three years later, another report was published taking stock of how far human security had become a strategic driver of European foreign and security policy and offering a number of concrete recommendations on how to take this agenda forward. See Human Security Study Group, "A European Way of Security: The Madrid Report of the Human Security Study Group Comprising a Proposal and Background Report" (Madrid: Human Security Study Group, 2007).

27. Kaldor, Martin and Selchow, *op. cit.*, p. 281.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 282–286.

29. Council of the European Union, "Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy: Providing Security in a Changing World" (Brussels: Council of the European Union, 2008), p. 2.

the approach and the main themes that characterise it are visible in the work done by the EU".³⁰

European security, as we define it for the purposes of this study, is about maximising security for the EU and its citizens and member states. In terms of the EU's foreign and security policy, this can be understood as the pursuit of EU internal security objectives with foreign policy tools, and has featured in a significant body of literature under the heading of externalisation of internal security objectives.³¹ The most frequent security threats identified in this debate, and of particular relevance to our study, include international terrorism, transnational organised crime and illegal migration.³² In dealing with these threats, the EU has employed a variety of foreign policy tools, including military and civilian CSDP/Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) missions, technical assistance and training programmes. The application of such policies as a response to conflict in the wider neighbourhood, thus, would suggest underlying European security concerns driving, at least in part, the formulation of EU foreign and security policy in this respect.

Based on this conceptualisation of human versus European security, we will now empirically test the extent to which the underlying principles of either are reflected in EU policy making vis-à-vis countries in the wider neighbourhood. In examining EU policies aimed at achieving greater security for the EU and those focusing on the human dimension of security in the wider neighbourhood across our set of cases, we will establish how far principles of respect for human rights, the establishment of legitimate political authority, multilateralism, a bottom-up approach and a regional focus have shaped EU policy. Analysing variation across cases subsequently allows us not only to identify differences in the EU's approach but also to examine how 'flexible' the Union's approach is to abiding by the principles of a human security doctrine.

Mapping Conflicts and EU Responses in the Wider Neighbourhood

Conflicts in the Wider Neighbourhood: A Sub-regional Overview

The EU introduced the concept of the "neighbours' neighbours" in a 2006 Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament. With reference to the need for enhanced regional cooperation, the Commission stated that "[w]e should also look beyond the Union's immediate neighbourhood, to work with 'the neighbours of our neighbours'".³³ While not very specific on which countries would be considered as the neighbours' neighbours, mention was made of Central Asia and the Gulf, as well as Kazakhstan.

30. Christou, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

31. Lavenex, *op. cit.*; Derek Lutterbeck, "Blurring the Dividing Line: The Convergence of Internal and External Security in Western Europe", *European Security*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (2005), pp. 231–253; Monar, *op. cit.*; Wyn Rees, "Inside Out: The External Face of EU Internal Security Policy", *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2008), pp. 97–111; Sarah Wolff, "The Mediterranean Dimension of EU Counter-Terrorism", *Journal of European Integration*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2009), pp. 137–156; Wolff, Wichmann and Mounier, *op. cit.*

32. Rees, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

33. Commission of the European Communities, "Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Strengthening the European Neighbourhood Policy" (Brussels: Commission of the European Communities, 2006), p. 11.

Our own approach to the issue of which countries to cover as part of the wider neighbourhood proceeds from the EU's immediate neighbours. In its southern dimension, the ENP in North Africa covers Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt,³⁴ and in the Middle East Israel and the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. In the eastern dimension, ENP partner countries are Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus, as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Thus, the neighbours' neighbours, and hence the countries we focus on in the following, are Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad and Sudan/South Sudan; Saudi Arabia,³⁵ Iraq and Iran; as well as Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.³⁶ Any such purely geographic distinction, however, is overly arbitrary and does not fully take account of geopolitical dynamics. We therefore include the three remaining states of former Soviet Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) in our study, not least because of the various regional dynamics tying these countries to each other and to the EU that have resulted in a specific Central Asia strategy of the EU.³⁷

This selection of countries presents us with a range of different conflicts within and between states (see Table 1). Intra-state conflicts are clearly more prevalent than inter-state conflicts. Of the latter kind, the territorial dispute between Sudan and South Sudan has been the one with the highest levels of violence (most of which occurred just before and after South Sudan became an independent state in 2011) and with the greatest potential for further escalation.³⁸ In contrast, inter-state conflicts in Central Asia (over water and borders) have been mostly non-violent and are unlikely to turn into major armed hostilities in the near future.³⁹

Intra-state conflicts abound across the wider neighbourhood. At the time of writing (January 2015), there are 19 such conflicts across 11 countries. Four of these conflicts are internationalised (drawing in one or more other state actor, usually a neighbouring state) and eight have a transnational dimension (involving a non-state actor, which is in all but two cases an international terrorist network). Almost half of these conflicts are territorial in nature, and the predominant trajectory of such territorial disputes is secessionist. Of the seven regime conflicts, three are driven by ethno-political disputes and four are linked with Islamist insurgencies. There were also three inter-communal conflicts, centred, respectively, on resource, sectarian and territorial disputes.

This categorisation, however, masks an often more complex reality on the ground, in which different dimensions of our classification overlap and change over time. For example, the current conflict in Mali has its roots in longstanding

34. Libya is a southern EU neighbour and has been eligible for, and benefited from, funding under the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument/European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENPI/ENI), even though it is not formally part of the ENP.

35. There is armed violence in Saudi Arabia, perpetrated by radical Islamists against Western and Saudi government targets, but it does not constitute a conflict in the sense the term is used here.

36. In Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan, there has been relatively little armed violence since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, certainly not conflict in the sense the term is used here.

37. European Commission, "European Community Regional Strategy Paper", *op. cit.*

38. Stefan Wolff, "South Sudan's Year One: Managing the Challenges of Building a New State", *RUSI Journal*, Vol. 157, No. 5 (2012), pp. 46–54.

39. Thomas Bernauer and Tobias Siegfried, "Climate Change and International Water Conflict in Central Asia", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (2012), pp. 227–239; John Heathershaw and Nick Megoran, "Contesting Danger: A New Agenda for Policy and Scholarship on Central Asia", *International Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 3 (2011), pp. 589–612.

Table 1. Conflicts in the Wider Neighbourhood

Country	Parties	Years	Level of conflict	Type of conflict
Sudan	GoSudan, GoSouth Sudan	2011–	Inter-state	Territorial (Abyei)
Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan	GoKazakhstan, GoTurkmenistan, GoUzbekistan	1991–	Inter-state	Inter-state resource conflict (water/Syr Darya, non-violent)
Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan	GoTurkmenistan, GoKazakhstan, GoUzbekistan, GoKyrgyzstan, GoTajikistan, GoRussia, GoChina, GoAfghanistan	1991–	Inter-state	Border disputes (occasional clashes, but predominantly non-violent)
Sudan/South Sudan	GoSudan, GoSouth Sudan, various nomadic tribes (Miseriya, Lou Nuer, Murle, Ngok Dinka)	2009–	Intra-state (transnational)	Inter-communal/resources
Iraq	Sunni and Shi'a militias, including AQ in Iraq	2003–	Intra-state (transnational)	Inter-communal/sectarian
Chad	GoChad, various northern rebel groups, Sudan	2005–2010	Intra-state	(internationalised)
Regime/ethno-political Kyrgyzstan	GoKyrgyzstan, ethnic Uzbeks	1990, 2010	Intra-state	Regime/ethno-political
South Sudan	GoSouth Sudan, various SPLM splinter groups	2011–	Intra-state	(internationalised)
Regime/ethno-political Mali	GoMali, Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat/AQIM	2002–	Intra-state (transnational)	Regime/Islamist insurgency
Kyrgyzstan	GoKyrgyzstan, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and others (e.g., Hizb ut- Tahrir)	1999–	Intra-state (transnational)	Regime/Islamist insurgency (decreasing levels of activity since early 2000s)
Uzbekistan	Go, Uzbekistan, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, and others (e.g., Hizb ut-Tahrir)	1999–	Intra-state (transnational)	Regime/Islamist insurgency (decreasing levels of activity since early 2000s)

Continued

Table 1. Continued.

Country	Parties	Years	Level of conflict	Type of conflict
Tajikistan	GoTajikistan, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and others (e.g., Hizb ut-Tahrir)	1999–, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012	Intra-state (transnational)	Regime/Islamist insurgency (decreasing levels of activity since early 2000s, increasingly localised thereafter in and around Rasht, including Kamarob gorge and Gorno-Badakhshan province)
Sudan	GoSudan, Janjaweed, various Darfur rebel groups	2002–	Intra-state	Territorial/autonomist
Sudan	GoSudan, Eastern Front	2004–2006	Intra-state	Territorial/autonomist
Iraq	GoIraq, Kurdistan Regional Government	2003–	Intra-state	Territorial/autonomist (inter-communal/territorial) (Kirkuk and disputed territories)
Iran	GoIran, Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan	2004–	Intra-state (transnational)	Territorial/secessionist
Mali	GoMali, Tuareg rebels	2007–2009	Intra-state	Territorial/secessionist
Mauritania	GoMauritania, POLISARIO/Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)	1975–	Intra-state	(internationalised)
Territorial/secessionist				
Niger	GoNiger, Tuareg rebels	2007–2009	Intra-state	Territorial/secessionist
Sudan	GoSudan, SPLM	1983–2005	Intra-state	Territorial/secessionist
Sudan	GoSudan, SPLM-North	2011–	Intra-state	(internationalised)
Territorial/secessionist (territorial/autonomist)				
Mali	GoMali, Tuareg rebels, AQIM	2012–	Intra-state (transnational)	Territorial/secessionist (regime/Islamist insurgency)

Notes: ^aCategorisation here relates to the level where the conflict predominantly occurs. We note any transnational (involving other non-state actors as conflict parties) or internationalised (involving other state actors as conflict parties) dimensions in parentheses.

^b At the inter-state level, we distinguish between border (demarcation) conflicts, territorial disputes and resource-driven conflicts. At the intra-state level, we distinguish between inter-communal, territorial and regime conflicts at the intra-state level and note further specification (sectarian or resource-driven; secessionist or autonomist; ethno-political or Islamist). Secondary drivers are noted in parentheses.

grievances among the Tuareg, but has become inextricably intertwined with the activities of jihadist and criminal networks across the Sahel and Maghreb regions.⁴⁰ Similarly, the territorial dispute over Kirkuk in Iraq has been multi-dimensional for all of the post-2003 period with the status of the territory being contested between Baghdad and Erbil at the national level and local communities struggling to agree on acceptable governance arrangements in Kirkuk.⁴¹ At the same time, recent developments in Iraq/Syria have added an obvious transnational dimension to it with Islamic State becoming another significant actor in the struggle for Kirkuk and its hydrocarbon resources.⁴²

Beyond the complexities of individual conflicts, there are also clear links between these conflicts, and between them and conflicts in the more immediate neighbourhood, i.e., the countries covered by the ENP. Again, the situation in Mali can serve as an illustrative example with links to the Tuareg conflict in neighbouring Niger, the spill-over effects of the violent regime change in Libya in 2011, including the flow of arms and fighters into and through Niger, and the spreading Islamist violence in Algeria and Mauretania from 2006/7 onwards.⁴³ The numerous conflicts within and between Sudan and South Sudan are similarly embedded in a complex web of local and transnational interest structures.⁴⁴

The security challenges that the countries under consideration here face combine with a range of other challenges related to the general capacity of institutions to tackle threats effectively and the living conditions of the countries' populations. All of these countries have been classified at least as weak states in the annual Fund for Peace Fragile States Index since 2006.⁴⁵ None of them was considered free by Freedom House in 2014 and many of them have never been even partially free.⁴⁶ As a consequence, EU responses to conflicts in the wider neighbourhood need to be considered in this wider context of policies formulated and implemented in low-capacity, non-democratic states. This, in turn, would make the adoption of a human security approach as suggested by Kaldor, Martin and Selchow⁴⁷ all the more relevant as it offers a framework in which policies aimed at long-term structural conflict prevention can be combined with short-term efforts to tackle immediate security and humanitarian needs.

40. Dario Cristiani and Riccardo Fabiani, "The Malian Crisis and Its Actors", *The International Spectator*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (2013), pp. 78–97; Gorm Rye Olsen, "Fighting Terrorism in Africa by Proxy: The USA and the European Union in Somalia and Mali", *European Security*, Vol. 23, No. 3 (2014), pp. 290–306.

41. Stefan Wolff, "Governing (in) Kirkuk", *International Affairs*, Vol. 86, No. 6 (2010), pp. 1361–1379.

42. Gareth Stansfield, "The Islamic State, the Kurdistan Region and the Future of Iraq: Assessing UK Policy Options", *International Affairs*, Vol. 90, No. 6 (2014), pp. 1329–1350; Dodge and Hokayem, *op. cit.*

43. Jesús Díez Alcalde, "Mali: Security, Democracy and Development to Overcome the Conflict", Paper presented at the Geopolitical Overview of Conflicts Conference, Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies, Madrid, 2013; Claire Mills, Arabella Lang and Jon Lunn, "The Crisis in Mali: Current Military Action and Upholding Humanitarian Law" (London: House of Commons Library, 2013).

44. Alex de Waal, "When Kleptocracy Becomes Insolvent: Brute Causes of the Civil War in South Sudan", *African Affairs*, Vol. 113, No. 452 (2014), pp. 347–369; International Crisis Group, "Sudan's Spreading Conflict (i): War in South Kordofan" (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2013); International Crisis Group, "Sudan's Spreading Conflict (ii): War in Blue Nile" (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2013); Karly Kupferberg and Stefan Wolff, "Sudan: 'Successful' Constitutional Reform Spurs Localized Violence", in Alan J. Kuperman (ed.), *Constitutions and Conflict Management in Africa: Preventing Civil War through Institutional Design* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

45. Fund for Peace, "Fragile States Index" (Washington, DC: Fund for Peace, 2014).

46. Freedom House, "Freedom in the World 2014" (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2014).

47. Kaldor, Martin and Selchow, *op. cit.*

EU Actions in the Wider Neighbourhood

The mapping exercise in the preceding section has, perhaps unsurprisingly, revealed that the EU faces a diverse and fluid picture of conflicts across its wider neighbourhood. Understanding EU responses to these conflicts initially requires a similar stock-taking exercise to provide a clearer picture of the kinds of policies the EU has developed and implemented vis-à-vis individual countries and entire sub-regions. In the following, we offer an overview of EU policies in the wider neighbourhood, focusing primarily on two types of policies—humanitarian and security/stability—outlining the way in which they do (or do not) incorporate the five principles of human security established by Kaldor, Martin and Selchow.⁴⁸

EU Policies in the Sahel

The Sahel region is one of the poorest and most environmentally damaged places on Earth. It faces numerous challenges related to extreme poverty and food crises, which are further exacerbated by significant demographic challenges—population growth, transmigration and emigration.⁴⁹ The region also suffers from social and gender inequality, internal tensions, institutional weakness and fragile governance, leading to a growth in organised crime, radicalisation and increasingly violent extremism, including that connected with global terrorist networks and their regional affiliates.⁵⁰ This is evident in the number and nature of conflicts that have affected the region: a succession of internationalised territorial conflicts in Mali, Niger and Mauritania, partly overlapping with a wider regional Islamist insurgency threatening regimes particularly in Mali and Niger, and an ethno-political challenge to the regime in Chad, which in turn is linked with the Darfur conflict in neighbouring Sudan.

The consequent security threats were recognised by the EU and a series of policy responses were brought together in the Union's regional strategy for the Sahel,⁵¹ combining actions primarily aimed at humanitarian relief and combatting insecurity and terrorism.

Actions for security and stability

Along with the extreme poverty and famine that plague the Sahel countries, insecurity and terrorism come to add to the difficulties of the region. The EU, recognising the inter-dependence of security and development, launched in 2011 the Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel. The objective of the strategy is to tackle the root causes of extreme poverty and also to eliminate security threats, leading these countries in sustainable development, by focusing mainly on reduction of insecurity, strengthening of governance and stability

48. *Ibid.*

49. European External Action Service, "Fact Sheet: The European Union and the Sahel" (Brussels: European Union External Action, 2014).

50. Daniel Fiott et al., "The Sahel Crisis: Where Do European and African Perspectives Meet?", *IES Policy Brief*, No. 02/2013 (2013); Robert Muggah and Steven Zyck, "Region in Crisis: Stabilizing Mali and the Sahel", *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2013).

51. European External Action Service, "Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel", *op. cit.*

through promotion of rule of law, human rights and socio-economic development, as well as prevention of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) attacks both in regional and EU territory and the elimination of drugs and other criminal trafficking.⁵²

Today, this strategy continues to provide the basis for EU action and has proven to be a valuable tool “to help countries in the wider Sahel-Sahara region to address key security and development challenges”.⁵³ After its establishment three important CSDP missions were launched in the region, i.e., the EUCAP Sahel Niger, the EUTM Mali and the EUCAP Sahel Mali. The purpose of the missions was to assist the governments of these states to overcome the conflicts besetting them. As noted in Table 1, these conflicts were internal, territorial conflicts, triggered mainly by actions of Tuareg rebels and Islamic insurgent groups.

In more detail, the EUCAP Sahel Niger is a civilian mission that aims to advise and train the Nigerian authorities in order to improve their capacities in combating terrorism and organised crime. This will be possible through the regional and international coordination of actions against terrorism and organised crime, the reinforcement of Niger’s security and rule of law and more effective management of resources. For this purpose the EU has engaged an authorised force of 80 personnel and so far the EUCAP Sahel Niger’s experts have trained around 3,000 members of the country’s internal security forces, armed forces and judiciary.⁵⁴

In Niger, the EU, apart from the EUCAP Sahel Niger, had launched the Support Programme for Justice and the Rule of Law, PAJED I and PAJED II.⁵⁵ Their goal was to strengthen the fight against organised crime and reinforce and reform the Niger’s justice sector by creating a specialised chamber to deal with terrorism and trafficking. PAJED II, continuing in the steps of PAJED I, was based on four components that responded to judicial institutions’ most urgent needs, combining the improvement of infrastructure and equipment, institutional support and the strengthening of judicial actors’ capacities.⁵⁶ In particular the EU targets the re-establishment and/or reinforcement of the administrative presence of the state, especially in the north of Niger.

Following the adoption by the Malian National Assembly of the Transition Roadmap on 29 January 2013, the EU decided to support AFISMA⁵⁷ and to launch the EUTM Mali.⁵⁸ The latter is committed to restoring political authority and democratic order through the implementation of the roadmap, which foresees an electoral calendar and the prospect of negotiations with the North. The EUTM Mali was mandated to help the Malian authorities “to exercise fully their sovereignty over the whole of the country and neutralise organised crime and terrorist

52. *Ibid.*

53. European External Action Service, “Fact Sheet: The European Union and the Sahel”, *op. cit.*

54. “EUCAP Sahel Niger Civilian Mission” (Brussels: European Union External Action Service, 2014).

55. European Commission, “The EU Reinforces Its Support for Development and Security in Niger” (Brussels: European Commission, 2013).

56. European External Action Service, “Bonne Gouvernance”, Délégation d’Union Européenne en République du Niger, available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/niger/eu_niger/dev_coop/governance/index_fr.htm> (accessed 23 January 2015).

57. European Commission, “Donor Conference on Mali: EU Pledges €50 Million to Support an African-Led Peace Operation (AFISMA)” (Brussels: European Commission, 2013).

58. Union Européenne Action Extérieure, “Mission de Formation de l’UE au Mali (EUTM Mali)” (Union Européenne Action Extérieure, Politique de Sécurité et de Défense Commune, 2014).

threats" that plague the country.⁵⁹ The mandate of the mission was extended up to 2016, allowing the training of four additional battalions of the Malian armed forces.⁶⁰ At the same time, the Council approved additional activities for the mission; during its renewed mandate, the operation will establish two mobile training teams that will follow up on the battalions previously trained, once they have returned to their garrisons, and "Train the Trainers" programmes will contribute to the sustainability of the mission's efforts.⁶¹

In addition to the military EUTM Mali mission, the EU decided in 2014 to deploy a civilian mission, EUCAP Sahel Mali. Promoting the establishment of legitimate political authority, its objective will be to "allow the Malian authorities to restore and maintain constitutional and democratic order and the conditions for lasting peace in Mali, and to restore and maintain State authority and legitimacy throughout the territory of Mali".⁶² For this purpose the EUCAP Sahel Mali personnel will assist and advise the Malian Internal Security Forces (ISF), i.e., police, gendarmerie and National Guard, to improve their operational efficiency, re-establish their respective chains of command, reinforce the role of judicial and administrative authorities with regard to the management and supervision of their missions, and facilitate their redeployment to the North.⁶³

Furthermore, after the crisis in Mali and the French intervention, the EU sent European External Action Service (EEAS) Crisis Response Department personnel to the Bamako EU Delegation to support the implementation of a short-term Instrument for Stability (IfS)⁶⁴ package, which focused on the restoration of security and protection of civilians, providing immediate support to Malian local authorities, promotion of dialogue and reconciliation initiatives, and reduction of radicalisation and violent extremism.⁶⁵ Under the IfS, the EU had also supported in the past the "Programme Spécial pour la Paix, la Sécurité et le Développement au Nord Mali", whose main objective was to reduce insecurity and terrorism in Northern Mali through the restoration of the state's security and administrative presence in 11 strategic sites called Secure Centres for Development and Governance.⁶⁶

59. European External Action Service, "EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali)" (Brussels: European External Action Service, 2014).

60. Council of the European Union, "EU Training Mission in Mali Extended" (Luxembourg: Council of the European Union, 2014).

61. *Ibid.*

62. Council of the European Union, "Council Decision 2014/219/CFSP of 15 April 2014 on the European Union CSDP Mission in Mali (EUCAP Sahel Mali)" (Luxembourg: Official Journal of the European Union, 2014).

63. *Ibid.*

64. The Instrument for Stability (IfS) was launched in 2007 as a follow-up to the Rapid Reaction Mechanism and has significantly intensified the European Commission's work in the area of conflict prevention, crisis management and peace building. The IfS focuses on a wide range of issues, such as support for mediation activities, confidence building, interim administrations, strengthening rule of law, transitional justice and the role of natural resources in conflict. Under the IfS, these activities can be supported in situations of crisis or emerging crisis, when timely financial help cannot be provided from other EU sources. The IfS has so far been used to finance a large number of crisis response projects worldwide. The largest share of funds was given to projects in Africa, the Asia-Pacific and the Balkans, followed by the Middle East and Latin America and the Caribbean.

65. European External Action Service, "Sahel—Crisis Response", available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/crisis-response/where-we-work/sahel/index_en.htm>.

66. "Paix et Sécurité: Le Programme Spécial pour la Paix, la Sécurité et le Développement au Nord Mali" (Brussels: European External Action Service, 2011).

Moreover, under the Joint EU–Africa Strategy, including actions in Mali, Mauritania and Niger, the EU seeks to promote holistic approaches to security, encompassing conflict prevention and long-term peace building, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, trying to address the root causes of the conflicts indicated in Table 1.⁶⁷ In Mauritania, the EU also supports the comprehensive national strategy to fight terrorism and eliminate the threats posed by Al-Qaeda in the country.⁶⁸

Finally, in Chad/CAR, the EU, aiming to tackle the longstanding crisis in Darfur in neighbouring Sudan, deployed a military mission (EUFOR TCHAD/RCA) in 2008–2009. This was one of the most multinational missions ever authorised in Africa, with 3,700 personnel from 26 EU and non-EU countries. The mission had as its main objective to “contribute to the protection of civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons, and to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid”.⁶⁹ To do so effectively required improvements to security in the area of operations to ensure the free movement of humanitarian aid workers and the mission’s personnel, and to contribute to the protection of UN personnel, premises, installations and equipment.⁷⁰

In 2009, the UN took over from EUFOR in both Chad and the CAR. However, the Union has remained fully engaged in the region, with a number of member states and third countries⁷¹ on the ground with the United Nations Mission in Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and around 2,000 troops who served in EUFOR becoming part of MINURCAT until the completion of the Mission’s mandate on 31 December 2010. In addition, the EU, emphasising the need for the safe and permanent return of the displaced persons, continues to provide substantial funding for the creation of the necessary conditions through the Accompanying Programme for Stabilisation. The IfS has also been used to finance MINURCAT’s programme to train, equip and support the deployment of Chadian police and gendarmes responsible for the security of the refugee camps and sites for displaced persons in eastern Chad.⁷²

Humanitarian actions

Since 2005, the Sahel region has suffered four food crises, caused mainly by poor rainfall, failed harvests and rising food prices.⁷³ The situation has deteriorated further through the return of migrant workers from Libya, who have no job or income.⁷⁴ By 2014, the crisis had resulted in 1.5 million severely malnourished

67. European Commission, “Key Facts on the Joint Africa–EU Strategy” (Brussels: European Commission, 2013).

68. European External Action Service, “Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel”, *op. cit.*

69. European Union, “EU Military Operation in Eastern Chad and North Eastern Central African Republic (EUFOR TCHAD/RCA)” (Brussels: European Union: European Security and Defence Policy, 2009).

70. *Ibid.*

71. Ireland, Austria, Finland, Poland, France, Albania, Croatia and Russia.

72. European Union, “EU Military Operation in Eastern Chad and North Eastern Central African Republic”, *op. cit.*

73. European Commission, “AGIR—Building Resilience to Food and Nutrition Crisis in the Sahel & West-Africa”, (Brussels: European Commission, 2014).

74. European Commission, “The European Commission’s Response to the Food Crisis and Long-Term Food Insecurity in the Sahel Region of Africa” (Brussels: European Commission, 2012).

children, 20 million food-insecure people and 25 million people living in extreme poverty without any social protection across the Sahel region.⁷⁵

The Union's main instrument for providing aid to countries in the Sahel is the European Development Fund (EDF),⁷⁶ which was first launched in 1959. Through the 11th EDF, the Sahel countries will benefit from approximately €5 billion in funding to "tackle the specific and complex challenges of the Sahel region: security and stability, development and resilience".⁷⁷ Governance, the rule of law and security, delivery of social services, agriculture and food security, regional trade and integration constitute the priorities of the development programme from 2014 to 2020. In addition, the EU supported the establishment of the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR), which aims to reduce chronic and acute malnutrition and to significantly increase the number of people who have access to basic public goods. For this purpose, the EU has committed to mobilising €1.5 billion in funding for regional and national programmes in the Sahel and West Africa during 2014–2020.⁷⁸

In order to address more effectively the needs of each receiving state, the EU uses National Indicative Programmes (NIPs), according to which each partner country will first establish its priorities and then receive aid based on them. This is meant to allow the EU to maximise the impact of the support provided by targeting resources at those areas where they are most needed and can be most effective.⁷⁹ Among the Sahel countries, Mauritania and Niger have their own NIPs.⁸⁰ For Mauritania, the NIP budgets €195 million for projects supporting the rule of law, health, sustainable agriculture and food security. For Niger, the budget is €596 million, focused on social policies, food security, infrastructure, as well as security and governance.

Furthermore, in Niger European aid for food security covers nearly one-third of the overall needs of the population,⁸¹ whereas in Mali the EU supported Oxfam in its efforts to assist 3,500 families to rebuild their livelihoods in the Kayes region. Finally, in Chad the EU has supported international and local NGOs in their fight against acute malnutrition affecting some 56,000 people. In addition, €8 million was channelled through the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) to support Chad's efforts to adapt to, and mitigate, the challenges raised by climate change. The EU is Chad's leading aid donor, with the target sectors being rule of law and good governance at both central and local government levels, and sustainable development for infrastructure and the rural sector. Using Chad as an example of the EU's commitment to pursue policies driven by the principles of human security, Andris Piebalgs, the European Commissioner for Development 2010–2014, noted that "the EU wishes to act as a real partner for Chad, in addition to being

75. European Commission, "AGIR—Building Resilience", *op. cit.*

76. Each EDF is directly financed by the EU countries, has its own financial regulation and is managed outside the framework of the EU's general budget.

77. European Commission, "EU Reinforces Its Support for the Sahel in the Years to Come" (Brussels: European Commission, 2013).

78. "Kristalina Georgieva, European Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response Speech: AGIR—One Year On" (Abidjan: European Commission, 2013).

79. Africa–EU Partnership, "Multiannual Indicative Programme 2014–2017, Pan-African Programme 2014–2020" (Africa-EU Partnership, 2014).

80. European Commission, "Signing of National Indicative Programmes with 16 ACP Countries" (Brussels: European Commission, 2014).

81. European Commission, "AGIR—Building Resilience to Food and Nutrition Crisis", *op. cit.*

its leading aid donor. We are promoting stability in the country and a strengthening of the rule of law within a context of democracy and inclusive growth. In addition, we are aware of the important role played by Chad in regional stability".⁸²

Summary

The EU's responses to conflict in the Sahel are embedded in existing bilateral and regional programmes, dating back more than half a century and having been traditionally focused on development and humanitarian aid. The escalation of conflicts after 2011 in Niger and Mali prompted an intensification of the Union's existing engagement. Under French leadership and based on a widely shared threat perception,⁸³ EU policy responses clearly reflected elements of the human security approach. They were regional, multilateral and in good part bottom-up. They also combined a security and stability response to an immediate threat to these countries, the region and the Union and its member states with a renewed broad focus on good governance (legitimate political authority and human rights).

EU Policies in Sub-Saharan Africa

In many respects, the situation in sub-Saharan Africa is a mirror image of the Sahel region, and the EU frequently expresses concerns about various interconnected crises there. Sudan and South Sudan—the two countries that “fit” with the definition of the wider neighbourhood used here—have been similarly plagued by the adverse consequences of natural and man-made disasters that mutually reinforce an ongoing and escalating humanitarian crisis. Yet the EU's actions there are considerably less robust in comparison.

Actions for security and stability

At a continent-wide level, the EU is supporting African Union (AU)-led efforts in the area of conflict prevention, management, resolution and peace building by funding the African Peace Facility (APF) and supporting the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) with both political backing and substantial funding of more than €1 billion over the past decade.⁸⁴

More specifically in relation to Sudan and South Sudan, the Union has supported international actions undertaken to end the conflict and ameliorate the situation in Darfur. In 2005, it provided assistance to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and supported the AU's political, military and police efforts for this purpose.⁸⁵ During its two-and-a-half-year term, the EU provided equipment and assets, planning and technical assistance and deployed military observers. It

82. European Commission, "European Union Announces Increase in Development Aid for Chad for 2014–2020" (Brussels: European Commission, 2013).

83. Council of the European Union, "Council Decision 2014/219/CFSP of 15 April 2014", *op. cit.*

84. Nicoletta Pirozzi, "EU Support to African Security Architecture", *European Union Institute for Security Studies Occasional Paper* 76 (2009).

85. European Union Council Secretariat, "EU Support to the African Union Mission in Darfur—AMIS" (Brussels: European Union Council Secretariat, 2008).

trained African troops, helped with tactical and strategic transportation and provided police assistance and training.⁸⁶

Since the independence of South Sudan in 2011, relations between the EU, Sudan, and South Sudan are regulated by the Comprehensive Approach document,⁸⁷ according to which the EU seeks to promote the development and peaceful co-existence of, and within, the two states. In an effort to end hostilities in and between Sudan and South Sudan the EU imposed an arms embargo on both countries⁸⁸ and it also sanctioned military leaders for obstructing negotiations.⁸⁹ More broadly, the EU has also encouraged the development of effective and accountable governments, while it has reaffirmed that it will continue to contribute to the coordination of international support under the overall leadership of the UN. The EU, hence, reiterated its commitment "to engage both Sudan and South Sudan in the promotion of democratic governance, respect for human rights and a peaceful and prosperous future for all Sudanese people".⁹⁰

The comprehensive approach is also evident in the EU's bilateral relations with Sudan. Apart from the conflict in Darfur, Sudan has faced more than a decade of violence and unrest in eastern Sudan and "inherited" a violent insurgency in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states as a result of the secession of South Sudan in 2011.⁹¹ In addition, the unresolved dispute with South Sudan over Abyei is a serious inter-state, territorial conflict teetering on the brink of a full-scale inter-state war. As a result, the EU has frequently called on the involved parties to end hostilities and begin dialogue,⁹² condemned all actions against civilians and international personnel, and endorsed all signed peace agreements and called on the parties to implement them.⁹³

Similarly, in relation to South Sudan, the EU responded positively to the request of the government of South Sudan to help with the improvement of conditions at Juba airport,⁹⁴ originally a local airport managing mainly domestic flights and unable to meet the increased demands of international air traffic after the country's independence. The EUAVSEC South Sudan mission was launched to assist the prevention of illegal trafficking and terrorist actions against airports, aircraft, crew and passengers, to provide training and mentoring security services, offer

86. European External Action Service, "EU Support to AMIS Darfur Mission Description", available: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eu-support-amis-darfur/mission-description/index_en.htm>.

87. Council of the European Union, "Council Conclusions on Sudan" (Luxembourg: Council of the European Union, 2011).

88. European Commission, "Restrictive Measures in Force" (Brussels: European Commission, 2014).

89. Council of the European Union, "EU Imposes Sanctions on South Sudanese Military Leaders" (Brussels: Council of the European Union, 2014); European Commission, "Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 75/2014 of 27 January 2014" (Luxembourg: Official Journal of the European Union, 2014).

90. Council of the European Union, "Council Conclusions on Sudan", *op. cit.*

91. Kupferberg and Wolff, *op. cit.*

92. European Union, "European Union Calls on Sudan to Abstain from Acts and Statements that Might Derail the Process of National Dialogue" (Khartoum: European Union: Delegation to the Republic of Sudan, 2014).

93. Council of the European Union, "Foreign Affairs Council Meeting Conclusions on South Sudan" (Brussels: Council of the European Union, 2014).

94. Council of the European Union, "EUAVSEC South Sudan to Strengthen Aviation Security in South Sudan" (Luxembourg: Council of the European Union, 2012).

advice and assistance on aviation security and support the coordination of security activities.⁹⁵

Since the violent escalation of factional infighting in South Sudan's ruling party in December 2013, the EU, together with Norway and the US (as well as the UK as part of the original "troika") has contributed to mediating peace talks between the warring factions.

Humanitarian actions

The EU provides substantial humanitarian assistance to South Sudan mainly through emergency responses and the provision of basic services. The EU also contributes development funds focusing on basic health and education needs and the improvement of the livelihoods of farmers, as well as for the fight against corruption and the strengthening of institutions. Moreover, following a bottom-up approach, the EU, in cooperation with the government of South Sudan and the UN, "is taking forward the joint programming of development assistance in several areas: justice/rule of law, education, health, water management, urban development and the rural economy".⁹⁶ Additionally, under the "Everything but Arms" initiative,⁹⁷ the EU has committed to continue cooperation with South Sudan on trade matters, aiming to offer duty-free and quota-free access to EU markets.⁹⁸ Finally, South Sudan requested accession to the Cotonou Agreement and its membership is expected to provide a formal framework to address other political, social and economic issues.⁹⁹

Sudan, by contrast, has not ratified the revised Cotonou Agreement and therefore currently has no access to national allocations under the European Development Funds. However, in mid-2010, the Council of the European Union earmarked "Special Funds" from former EDF projects and additional unused funds from the STABEX instrument, which were disbursed locally and regionally in Sudan and South Sudan. Sudan also benefits from annual grants under other instruments, more specifically the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, the Instrument for Stability and the Development Cooperation Instrument thematic budget lines.¹⁰⁰

Summary

In comparison to the Sahel region discussed earlier, the EU's response to conflicts within and between Sudan and South Sudan has been considerably less coherent

95. European External Action Service, "European Common Security and Defence Policy: European Union Aviation Security Mission (EUAVSEC) in South Sudan", updated February 2014, available: <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/euavsec-south-sudan/pdf/factsheet_euavsec_south-sudan_en.pdf> (accessed February 2015).

96. European Union External Action, "The EU and South Sudan" (Brussels: European Union External Action, 2014).

97. European Commission, "Everything but Arms (EBA)—Who Benefits?" (Brussels: European Commission, 2013).

98. European External Action Service, "EU Relations with the Republic of South Sudan", available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/south_sudan/index_en.htm>.

99. European External Action Service, "CSDP Mission to Strengthen Airport Security in South Sudan", *op. cit.*

100. "Sudan", available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/sudan/index_en.htm>.

and less well funded. As a consequence, and while the Union formally promotes a range of human security objectives, it has done this so far less effectively, partly also because of a lack of clear leadership by, and within, the EU. Bilateral relations with both countries remain tense and easily susceptible to derailment by events on the ground, which additionally diminishes the effectiveness of EU engagement. This, and the lack of clear threats posed by Sudan and South Sudan to the EU and/or individual member states, simultaneously decreases the incentives for the EU to expend greater efforts on either country – with respect to its own and human security concerns.

EU Policies in the Middle East

The Middle East has a long history of conflict and of EU engagement there, particularly through the southern dimension of the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy and its predecessors. The Union's neighbours' neighbours relevant to this study are Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia. After the 2003 US-led military intervention in Iraq, the EU has been closely engaged in the country's recovery and reconstruction, contributing both humanitarian aid and support for the restoration of stability and security. The EU's engagement with Iran relates primarily to the EU3–Iran negotiations and the Union's mediation of the P5+1 talks on Iran's nuclear programme,¹⁰¹ and we therefore do not include Iran in our analysis. Nor do we cover Saudi Arabia as it does not experience conflicts in the sense we define them for the purposes of this article.

Actions for security and stability

Two years after the 2003 military intervention the EU established the civilian EUJUST LEX Iraq mission to "strengthen the rule of law and to promote a culture of respect for human rights in Iraq by providing professional development opportunities for high- and mid-level Iraqi officials from the criminal justice system".¹⁰² Its mandate lasted from 2005 to 2013 and during this time more than 7,000 mid- and high-level Iraqi officials were trained or mentored. The mission covered all branches of the Iraqi criminal justice sector, trained judges and prosecutors, enhancing their understanding of international judicial cooperation, and also improved areas of the police and the penitentiary system.¹⁰³ Efforts were also made to strengthen local capacities in the fight against domestic violence and human trafficking. Since the end of the mission's mandate, the EU has continued to monitor the situation on the ground and responded appropriately when necessary.¹⁰⁴

101. Riccardo Alcaro and Aniseh Bassiri Tabrizi, "Europe and Iran's Nuclear Issue: The Labours and Sorrows of a Supporting Actor", *The International Spectator*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (2014), pp. 14–20; Lynne Dryburgh, "The EU as a Global Actor? EU Policy Towards Iran", *European Security*, Vol. 17, Nos. 2–3 (2008), pp. 253–271; Bernd Kaussler, "From Engagement to Containment: EU–Iran Relations and the Nuclear Programme, 1992–2011", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (2012), pp. 53–76.

102. European External Action Service, "EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX-Iraq)" (Brussels: European External Action Service, 2014).

103. Daniel Korski, "EUJUST LEX (Iraq)", in Grevi, Helly and Keohane, *op. cit.*

104. European External Action Service, "EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq (EUJUST LEX-Iraq)", *op. cit.*

Iraq remains beset by intra-state conflicts between its different ethnic and sectarian groups. In light of the recent escalation of violence and the rise of Islamic State, the EU committed to provide additional funds to mobilise the European Emergency Response Coordination Centre¹⁰⁵ and activate the European Civil Protection Mechanism,¹⁰⁶ as well as to enhance EEAS presence in Erbil in the Kurdistan region of Iraq.¹⁰⁷ In addition, the Council welcomed the decision of individual member states to provide military support to the Kurdish authorities fighting against IS, while it urged all UN member states to implement sanctions against it as agreed.¹⁰⁸

Humanitarian actions

Since 2003, the EU has contributed to the efforts to strengthen democracy, promote human rights, boost economic growth and reduce poverty in Iraq. The improvement of institutions in the areas of criminal justice, basic services, elections and civil society organisations are considered to be critical for the achievement of these objectives.

In addition, the EU regards closer economic ties to be an important aspect of Iraq's recovery and reconstruction and seeks to promote bilateral trade relations and improve trade cooperation while also ensuring a minimum level of predictability, transparency and legal certainty for economic operators, including EU-based investors in Iraq. A significant step for closer cooperation was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on a Strategic Energy Partnership in 2010, which provides a political framework for reinforcing energy relations between Iraq and the EU. It also outlines priorities for future cooperation, emphasising the development of an energy policy for the Iraqi people, energy security of supplies between Iraq and the EU and renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.¹⁰⁹

The EU has emphasised the need to reform basic services such as education, health and infrastructure, with a particular focus on education with the aim of supporting "Iraqi national efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goals ... which have a strong two-way link to the peace consolidation process".¹¹⁰ In order to establish an effective roadmap for targeting EU support in this context, the European Commission, in cooperation with Italy, Germany and Sweden, drafted a Joint Strategy Paper for 2011–2013 which focused on good governance, socio-economic recovery and water management and agriculture as priority areas for support and on

105. The Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) coordinates rapid responses to disasters both inside and outside Europe using resources from 31 countries participating in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. The ERCC collects and analyses real-time information on disasters, prepares plans for the deployment of experts and equipment and works with member states to map the EU's disaster response by matching offers of assistance to the needs of the disaster-stricken country.

106. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was established in 2001 to enable coordinated assistance from the participating states to victims of natural and man-made disasters in Europe and elsewhere.

107. Council of the European Union, "Council Conclusions on Iraq" (Brussels: Press Office-General Secretariat of the Council, 2014).

108. European External Action Service, "Joint Statement by the Third EU–LAS Ministerial Meeting on the Security Situation in Iraq" (Athens: European Union External Action, 2014); Council of the European Union, "Council Conclusions on Iraq", *op. cit.*

109. The Government of the Republic of Iraq and the EU, "Memorandum of Understanding between the EU and the European Union on Strategic Partnership in Energy" (Baghdad, 2010).

110. EU, UNICEF and Government of Iraq, "UNICEF, European Union and Government of Iraq Launch €17m Programme to Improve Primary Education in Iraq" (Baghdad, 2011).

education and the strengthening of institutional capacity as priority actions, alongside human rights, gender equality and the protection of vulnerable groups.¹¹¹

In 2012, the EU and Iraq signed a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which provides a formal framework for dialogue and cooperation on the above matters. The Union's goals through the PCA are to promote internal and regional stability through the closer engagement of Iraq with the international community. An additional target is to strengthen the institutions, the socio-economic reforms and the development already taking place in the country.¹¹²

For the period 2014–2020, the EU plans to focus on strengthening human rights and the rule of law, improving primary and secondary education and providing access to sustainable energy for all.

Summary

The EU's involvement in Iraq must be seen in the context of the deeply divisive US-led intervention in 2003. As a consequence, for over a decade the EU made a clear commitment to focus on the non-military dimensions of state-building in the country, but the effectiveness of its efforts was hampered by a lack of clear leadership by, and within, the EU. The apparent stabilisation of the situation in Iraq after 2008 also facilitated the continued focus of the EU on these longer-term structural policies, including in collaboration with other international partners. Only recently has the Union shifted to a more robust and intense engagement with Iraq in response to a very clear and concrete threat—the rise of IS. As indicated in the 2012 PCA with Iraq, a stronger focus on some elements of the human security approach, such as human rights and the rule of law, can be expected as an EU contribution as part of broader international and regional efforts to stabilise the country. In light of the EU's responses to the rise of Islamic State in Syria and Iraq through the latter half of 2014, combining both humanitarian efforts and a range of crisis management policies, the EU's approach begins to resemble more closely its actions in Sahel. Specifically, among others, the commitment to “the preparation of a comprehensive EU regional strategy”¹¹³ in light of the threat posed by Islamic State underscores the point that elements of the human security approach are pursued more consistently in the presence of the EU's own security interests.

EU Policies in Central Asia

Although the EU has been engaged with the five central Asian states since the early 1990s, their relations have significantly intensified since the adoption of the EU's Central Asia Strategy in 2007. This strategy created a formal framework for cooperation in several areas, including education, rule of law, human rights, energy and transport, environment, trade and economic relations, as well as security challenges such as border management and drug trafficking.¹¹⁴

111. European Commission, “Cooperation between the European Union and Iraq. Joint Strategy Paper 2011–2013” (Brussels: European Commission, 2010).

112. European External Action Service, “EU–Iraq Relations”, available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/iraq/index_en.htm>.

113. Council of the European Union, “3361st Meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council: Main Results” (Brussels: Council of the European Union, 2014).

114. European Commission, “European Community Regional Strategy Paper”, *op. cit.*

Actions for security and stability

Soon after the break-up of the Soviet Union, the EU recognised the challenge the new states faced after 1991 to build an entire border management infrastructure and train the staff to service these borders. Considering also the fact that high levels of opium and heroin easily pass from nearby Afghanistan and that effective border control is an important security issue, the EU launched the Border Management in Central Asia Programme (BOMCA), one of the biggest Commission assistance programmes in the region,¹¹⁵ which has had a significant impact on the overall constructive management of boundary disputes within the region.

Only a decade and a half later, the EU formally acknowledged in its Strategy for Central Asia that human rights, rule of law, good governance and democratisation increase the chances for long-term stability.¹¹⁶ Reflecting on the fact that the EU had imposed sanctions in the past on Uzbekistan because of constant human rights violations, and given that human rights issues are systematically raised in political meetings with Central Asian states, the EU has initiated dialogues on human rights with all five Central Asian countries. These dialogues “constitute an essential part of the EU’s overall strategy to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, sustainable development, peace and stability” in the region.¹¹⁷

Similarly, the European Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia is one of the key elements of the 2007 EU Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia. The initiative, led by two EU member states, Germany and France, seeks a regional approach which aims to tackle challenges common to all Central Asian states, including shortcomings in the judicial system, problems in law enforcement, and lack of accountability of national administrations.¹¹⁸ This initiative is implemented by in-country programmes that set relevant national priorities.¹¹⁹

In comparison to these broader programmes, the Union’s security/stability response to the conflict in Kyrgyzstan has been very limited: the Union endorsed the decision of the government to establish the Kyrgyzstan Enquiry Commission to investigate the inter-ethnic violence that occurred in the south of the country in June 2010.¹²⁰

Humanitarian actions

EU involvement in Central Asia began with the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) programme, which aimed in 1991 to support the five newly independent states in their economic and social

115. European Commission, “EU Supports Well-Managed Borders in Central Asia”, (Brussels: European Commission, 2002).

116. European Commission, “European Community Regional Strategy Paper”, *op. cit.*

117. European Commission, “EU Human Rights Dialogues in Central Asia”, (Brussels: European Commission, 2009).

118. European Commission, “EU Rule of Law Initiative for Central Asia” (Brussels: European Commission, 2008).

119. European Union, “EU-Central Asia High Level Security Dialogue” (Brussels: European External Action Service, 2013); European Commission, “EU Human Rights Dialogues in Central Asia”, *op. cit.*; “The European Union Supports Prevention of Torture Via Projects with the Tian Shan Policy Center and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights” (Bishkek: Delegation of the European Union to the Kyrgyz Republic, 2014).

120. Kyrgyzstan Enquiry Commission, “Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry into the Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan” (Kyrgyzstan Enquiry Commission, 2010).

development period. TACIS was replaced in 2007 by the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), aimed at reducing poverty and promoting sustainable economic and social development. The DCI more broadly also focuses on the Millennium Development Goals, i.e., health, education, social cohesion and employment, as well as the promotion of democracy, good governance, and respect for human rights and rule of law.¹²¹

In accordance with the Strategy for a New Partnership with Central Asia, the Regional Strategy Paper for Assistance to Central Asia (2007–2013) focused on three main topics—rule of law (see above), education and environment.¹²²

In the field of education the EU–Central Asia Education Initiative has led to a significant increase in EU support for educational exchanges, education reforms and professional training. In addition, under the Education Initiative various cooperation programmes have taken place at the regional level, such as the Tempus (modernisation in the higher education sector), the Erasmus Mundus Partnership (academic partnerships and student/scholar mobility) and the Central Asia Research and Education Network–CAREN (financing for high-speed information and communication networks).

At the regional level, the Investment Facility for Central Asia (IFCA), launched in 2010, aims to promote additional investments and key infrastructure in the fields of energy, environment and social infrastructure, while its extension to transport is also on schedule.¹²³ Funds from this programme have already been channelled in Kazakhstan to support local banks to finance energy efficiency projects and reduce energy losses and to Tajikistan for the improvement of water sanitary systems. The EU contributes to the World Bank's Central Asia Energy-Water Development Program (CAEWDP) with the objective to strengthen cooperation and coherence between the World Bank programme and EU initiatives on energy and water.¹²⁴ Noteworthy in this context is the EU–Central Asia Environment and Water Initiative, which focuses on water resource management, environmental protection measures, environmental governance and climate change¹²⁵ and has contributed to the so far peaceful management of the region's potential water conflicts.

Apart from these regional initiatives, the EU has launched several programmes addressing the needs of each individual state in Central Asia. In Uzbekistan, the Institution Building Partnership Programme (IBPP) was established to reinforce the Uzbek civil society, by promoting partnership and cooperation between Uzbek NGOs and their counterparts in the European Union. Various projects have been completed under the IBPP focusing on social issues. This initiative has proven to be a successful tool for a bottom-up approach “enhancing the participation of women, children and socially underprivileged as final beneficiaries”.¹²⁶ Moreover, the EU, together with the UN Children's Fund and the Ministry of

121. European Parliament, “Työasiakirja on European Court of Auditors Special Report No 13/2013 (2013 Discharge): ‘EU Development Assistance to Central Asia’”, Talousarvion Valvontavaliokunta (ed.) (European Parliament, 2014).

122. European Commission, “European Community Regional Strategy Paper”, *op. cit.*

123. European Union, “European Union–Central Asia Development Cooperation”, European Commission (ed.) (Belgium: Publications Office of the European Union, 2011).

124. European Commission, “EU to Join Efforts with the World Bank to Develop Water and Energy in Central Asia” (Brussels: European Commission: Spokespersons' Service, 2012).

125. European Union, “European Union–Central Asia Development Cooperation”, *op. cit.*

126. European Commission, “Institution Building and Partnership Programme (IBPP), Civil Society Projects in Uzbekistan” (Brussels: European Commission, 2011).

Health, has established a joint programme for the reduction of child mortality and the improvement of maternal health, the "Improvement of Mother and Child Care Services".¹²⁷

EU relations with Uzbekistan are regulated by the 1999 Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, while the country receives financial aid in the fields of rural and local development, rule of law and judiciary reform, trade facilitation and support to the private sector and small businesses.¹²⁸ In 2011, the EU and Uzbekistan also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of energy. The main objectives of the MoU are the modernisation and improvement of infrastructure for energy production and supply, more efficient regional and international cooperation on the national energy systems and the development of cleaner energy and alternative resources.¹²⁹

The EU supports Kyrgyzstan through several initiatives, such as the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), the Instrument for Stability (IfS), Support to Non-State Actors (DCI-NSA), Investing in People (DCI-HUM), Investing in the Environment (DCI-ENV), the Nuclear Safety Co-operation Instrument (NSCI), the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP), and Migration Management and Irregular Migration (MIEUX). The actions of the EU focus on social protection, educational reform and rule of law.¹³⁰

Tajikistan and the EU have also signed a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the objective to enhance their cooperation, promote human rights and facilitate Tajikistan's economic transition and development and cooperation in all key areas of reform.¹³¹ The EU has also launched five new projects under the EIDHR programme, which target mainly the promotion and support of human rights and democracy.¹³²

Summary

Central Asia is by far the least conflict-affected area of the wider neighbourhood in comparison to the Sahel, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. While there are concerns about security and stability in the region, related to transnational

127. European External Action Service, "The Government of Uzbekistan, the EU and UNICEF Re-commit to Equitable Health Care for Mothers and Children", Delegation of the EU to the Republic of Uzbekistan, available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/uzbekistan/press_corner/all_news/news/2012/20120723_01_en.htm>.

128. European External Action Service, "EU Relations with Uzbekistan", available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/uzbekistan/index_en.htm>.

129. The European Union and the Republic of Uzbekistan, "Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Energy between the European Union and the Republic of Uzbekistan" (Brussels, 2011).

130. European External Action Service, "EU Relations with the Kyrgyz Republic", available: <http://eeas.europa.eu/kyrgyz_republic/index_en.htm>.

131. "Partnership and Cooperation Agreement Establishing a Partnership between the European Communities and Their Member States, of the One Part, and the Republic of Tajikistan, of the Other Part", Treaties Office Database, available: <<http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/prepareCreateTreatiesWorkspace/treatiesGeneralData.do?step=0&redirect=true&treatyId=7341>>.

132. UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "European Union Supports Human Rights and Democracy in Tajikistan", Asia-PLUS Daily Blitz, available: <<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refdaily?pass=463ef21123&id=52f3349b5>>.

organised crime, spill-over effects from Afghanistan, local and regional Islamist terrorism and inter-ethnic tensions, as well as resource and boundary disputes within and among Central Asian states, these pale in comparison to other areas examined here. This is reflected in the EU's approach to the region, which has adopted, at regional and bilateral levels, a set of policies aimed at enhancing cooperation with the region's states by strengthening the capacity of their institutions and economies. While this includes a series of policies aimed at improving human rights and the rule of law, significantly more is invested in issues related to effective border management and the development of the region's energy resources—two areas of core concern to the EU and its member states; concerns, moreover, that have so far by and large remained unaffected by actual and latent conflicts in the region. In other words, despite a significant human security deficit across the Central Asian region, EU policies make far less use of the human security approach.

Conclusion

Across the wider neighbourhood, the EU's approach to managing conflict within and between states clearly incorporates elements of a human security approach. Through its various efforts, the Union has promoted respect for human rights and the need to establish or strengthen legitimate political authority, and it has done so through multilateral, bottom-up and regional efforts. Across the different countries that constitute the neighbours' neighbours, these dimensions are all present in EU policies, albeit to varying degrees.

In this sense, human security is more than a rhetorical concept and is clearly evident in the EU's efforts to increase security and stability at a country and regional level and to contribute to humanitarian relief and longer-term development. While the EU remains focused on a set of core activities (rule of law/good governance, institutional capacity building, humanitarian aid), programmes and projects are adapted to specific countries' particular needs within this framework. This includes specific activities related to conflicts as and when they occur or escalate, but the EU's policies as such are not specifically "conflict-driven". Rather, responses to conflicts are embedded in existing regional and bilateral policies. It reflects what might be considered a comprehensive approach: the onset or escalation of a conflict triggers not only an additional conflict-related policy response (e.g., a military and/or civilian CSDP mission) but also a reassessment of the whole package of existing policies. This is most obvious in relation to the Sahel where this approach has also been facilitated by a common threat perception and by clear leadership of, and within, the EU in response to the crisis in Mali since 2012. Where either is absent, EU responses have often been less decisive. This is the case in relation to Sudan and South Sudan and to some extent Iraq (although there are indications of positive change in response to the current IS crisis).

While undeniably part of the EU's foreign and security policy in the wider neighbourhood, the normative motivations that underpin the human security approach are not a strategic driver of EU action. Where the EU has the most significant impact on human security—through humanitarian aid that relieves suffering in

the short term—it has not achieved the sustainable change that would be necessary to create an environment in which human security can be provided locally by states and their governance arrangements.

As a consequence, the dependence on the EU as a human security provider becomes entrenched. While local and regional security and stability are absolutely essential in the broader context of human security, the volatility of the wider neighbourhood to domestic, external and transnational threats in the context of generally weak, low-capacity states requires a focus on traditional, hard security functions and capabilities but creates few incentives for states to embrace the broader human security agenda as long as EU humanitarian action tackles the most immediate survival needs of populations under threat.

The fact that the EU has contributed to the perpetuation of this state of affairs that effectively enables states across the wider neighbourhood to further their own regime security needs (with significant assistance from the EU) and leave the achievement of essential human security needs to the EU is only in part a function of the need to build institutional resilience among the neighbours' neighbours. It also indicates that the EU approaches human security in an instrumental way in pursuit of its own security interests. The EU's "flexibility" of adopting a human security approach is thus a function of the extent to which its own interests are threatened. This becomes clear in the context of our comparative analysis: in the Sahel (and increasingly in Iraq/Syria) EU security interests are significantly more at stake than in relation to the Sudans and Central Asia, and it is in these latter two areas where the adoption of the human security approach is least evident.

The instrumental use of elements of the human security approach clearly has some positive consequences for people on the ground, but only in the short term. In the long term, this approach is unlikely to lock in these temporary human security gains and carries the risk of forever managing and containing recurrent security threats in the wider neighbourhood rather than resolving them. This would clearly run counter to the aspirations associated with an approach that considers human security as an end in itself rather than merely a tool to achieve greater European security.

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About the Authors

Argyro Kartsonaki is a Doctoral Researcher in the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham, UK. Her current research focuses on contemporary self-determination conflicts. Kartsonaki holds an MA in European Public Policy from the University of Crete and a BA in International Economic and Political Studies from the University of Macedonia.

Stefan Wolff is Professor of International Security at the University of Birmingham, UK, and an Associate Fellow of the Royal United Services Institute in London. He has widely published in the area of international crisis management and post-conflict state-building, and among his 18 books to date are *Ethnic Conflict: A Global Perspective* (Oxford University Press, 2007), *Conflict Management in Divided Societies* (Routledge, 2011) and *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager* (Routledge, 2012). Wolff is a graduate of the University of Leipzig, and he holds an MPhil from the University of Cambridge and a PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Science.