European Security

Introduction

George Christou[a]; Stuart Croft[a]
[a] Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Introduction

Security Governance is a term that has slowly developed as an organizing concept over, perhaps, the last ten years. It seeks to capture something that is obvious to both analysts and policy-makers, yet also rather amorphous: a multiplicity of actors in the security field, a broadening of the activities that might be deemed to lie in the in field of security, and also the way in which security issues and discourses have been the subject to a variety of forms of institutionalization. And 'governance' seems a reasonable frame with which to try to develop a holistic focus on those three interrelated dimensions: governance, after all, is a well-developed concept that allows analysts to examine regulation and management in a number of issue areas, not least those within the European Union. Recent scholarship in the field has been incisive, with far-reaching implications (for example, Kirchner and Sperling 2007a, 2007b, 2010, Webber 2007, Wagnsson et al. 2009).

Yet, we argue in this special issue that there is still more work to do to develop what is meant by 'security governance', because to date, much of the work in the field has focused far more on the 'governance' aspect of the concept than it has on the 'security' side. Kirchner and Sperling (2007a) argued that the key functions of security governance lie in the emphasis on conflict prevention, and institution building; Webber (2007) argued that security governance as a system was bounded, and that the three aspects that follow were the nature and contestation of the 'region', the level of institutionalization within, and the compliance of the actors with the norms of the system of security governance. We do not argue with these insights. Rather, by injecting security theory into the concept, we suggest that it can be made into a far more rigorous tool, and one that can be deployed to understand the key aspects of a variety of issues framed in the security field. The first section of this special issue, then, attempts to develop the theoretical framework and to examine how that might be applied. The first article is the conceptual foundation for the Special Issue, and sets out the core theoretical dimensions that the authors in this special issue have engaged with, in different ways. In the main, this has included: how EU security logics are constructed; how such EU security logics have played out in terms of governance/governmentality; and what the main implications have been in terms of the EU's security governance practice.

The implications of the framework are examined in terms of implementation in the two subsequent papers: first at the macro level by Schulz and Söderbaum, and then at the micro level by Barnutz. Schulz and Söderbaum ask, in the light of the foundational theory paper, how might a 'security heavy' notion of security governance shape the way in which regional conflicts outside Europe are understood and comprehended?

For Barnutz, at the micro level, the focus is on how the EU has spoken and performed security in specific ways and times, again in the light of the 'security heavy' concept of security governance developed in the foundational paper. Together, this first section attempts to setup, and develop, a framework for understanding what security governance is when security theory is applied to the concept.

That which is of particular relevance to this Special Issue is the question of agency within a framework of security governance. That is, we want to examine the role of the EU as a security actor within a framework of security governance. This is especially important in the light of the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, which promises an enhanced role for the Union as a global actor. Whether that is so, of course, depends in part on the resources that are available, as argued by Rieker (2009). However, it is also fundamentally dependent upon what is meant by an 'enhanced role' conceptually; and it is here that security governance is an important tool. If the EU is to play an 'enhanced role' that is significant and important, that means both playing a role in the development of security governance in Europe and beyond as a system of regulation and management that has legitimacy for all actors, as well as pursuing the EU's interests within that system. The system can take many forms – as Dorussen et al. (2010, p. 577) argue, ranging from '...a primitive balance of power to highly institutionalised security communities'. Clearly there are normative dimensions to this, with values such as cooperation and democracy key elements in the sort of security governance structure that the EU – and of course, its member states – would want to see constructed and maintained in both European and global security governance structures.

If we see 'security governance' – with an injection of security theory – as fundamental in the development of the enhanced role in peace and security for the EU, then this must rest in the first instance in an ability to develop and implement security governance in Europe. After all, it was the sense of challenge, or even for some, failure, in the EU's engagement with the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s that led many to argue for an enhancement of integration and/or cooperation in the field of defense and security; if the EU could not seriously manage European crises, how could it do so globally? (Gow 1997). Hence, the second block of articles in this Special Issue looks at the nature of the geospatial dimension of security governance in the north, east, and south. In his article on the northern dimension, Browning shows the tensions and constraints faced by the EU as an agent of security governance. Christou's analysis of the eastern dimension demonstrates how EU security narratives have led to inconsistent and contradictory practice and thus sub-optimal policy for achieving stability and security. Pace argues in the context of the southern dimension that despite the EU's official discourse of inclusive security, the practice of security governance results in an exclusionist policy that creates greater instability and insecurity.

The final section of the Special Issue looks at the nature of security governance, and the EU's role within as a system maintainer and as an actor, in a variety of security fields. The argument here is that the nature of acting in a global context is not simply one defined by geopolitical regions and moves. Rather, in contemporary globalized security politics, it is the nature of expert debate and material realities in specific security fields that are shaped by, and subject to, constraints, restrictions, and

opportunities inherent in the performance of security governance. There are no ways of creating hierarchies amongst these security fields, and so this Special Issue, in the final set of articles, develops insights across a range of case studies. The article by Hassan, demonstrates lucidly how the EU's terrorism and counter-terrorism strategy has evolved as a result of crisis and post-crisis narrations. The increasingly securitized nature of the strategy and governance of terrorism, he concludes, has generated greater insecurity inside and outside the EU. Santini analyses EU discourses towards the Iranian Nuclear program. She argues that, overall, a coercive-securitization discourse has become hegemonic over democracy promotion and cultural diplomacy-inspired discourses and that European policies have consistently followed suit. Ceccorulli turns her attention to the issue of migration, with a specific focus on the east, and demonstrates how the EU's security logic and subsequent governmentality of migration has implications both for creating stability to the east, and indeed, addressing human rights concerns. The final article by Peters, argues that the EU's security discourse on the Israeli/Palestine conflict has changed from a normative, rights and justice-based framing to that of securitization over time. He shows how the subsequent governance tools associated with such discourses have often hindered the EU's credibility, and indeed ability to transform the dynamics of the Israel–Palestine conflict towards a peaceful resolution.

Acknowledgements

References

Dorussen, H., Emil Kirchner, E., and Sperling, J., 2010. Conclusion: structure, agency and the barriers to global security governance. *In*: E. Kirchner and J. Sperling, eds. *National security cultures: patterns of global governance*. London: Routledge, 287–301.

Gow, J., 1997. *Triumph of the lack of will: international diplomacy and the Yugoslav war*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Kirchner, E. and Sperling, J., 2007a. *EU security governance*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Kirchner, E. and Sperling, J., eds., 2007b. *Global security governance: competing perceptions of security in the 21st century*. London: Routledge.

Kirchner, E. and Sperling, J., eds., 2010. *National security cultures: patterns of global governance*. London: Routledge.

Rieker, P., 2009. The EU – a capable security actor? Developing administrative capabilities. *Journal of European integration*, 31 (6), 703–719.

Wagnsson, C., Sperling, J., and Hallenberg, J., 2009. *European security governance: the European union and the Westphalian world*. London: Routledge.

Webber, M., 2007. *Inclusion, exclusion and the governance of European security*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

George Christou
Department of Politics and International Studies
University of Warwick, Coventry, UK
G.Christou@warwick.ac.uk
Stuart Croft
Department of Politics and International Studies
University of Warwick, Coventry, UK