



The EU and (Regional?) Insecurity in the Horn of Africa

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Working Paper N° 29

January 2012





EU-GRASP

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to look at how the EU deals with a region that is conflict prone and marked by a high level of insecurity. The Horn of Africa is characterised by the existence of both open conflicts and latent conflicts. Moreover, these conflicts tend to have transnational and regional nature whether it is because of external interventions by neighbouring states or unresolved inter-state disputes. The Horn of Africa is also a region of international strategic concern that touches on several security issues including violent conflicts, human rights violation, terrorism and migration. However, from the EU's side, the most visible element of its involvement in the region is the deployment of EUNAVFOR Atalanta mission, but it is interesting to see whether this mission forms part of a more general approach toward the region. The paper thus focuses on the way the EU constructs the security problems of the Horn of Africa and the approach it adopts to address these problems.

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The EU and (Regional?) Insecurity in the Horn of Africa

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Introduction

The Horn of Africa¹ is a region that is notorious for being prone to violence. In the last four decades it has witnessed two of the most important inter-state conflicts in Africa; first with the Ogaden War between Ethiopia and Somalia in 1978-1979 and secondly between Ethiopia and Eritrea during the years 1998 to 2000. In addition to these major conventional wars, the Horn has also been the theatre of numerous intra-state conflicts. These conflicts have sometimes lasted over several decades such as the case for the Eritrean liberation war, the North-South conflict in Sudan and even the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebellion in Northern Uganda. Moreover, these conflicts have often involved high levels of violence and resulted in casualties that number in the hundreds of thousands. One of the latest examples of such a situation is the case of the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, where the death toll has been estimated to be over 300 000 and has been labelled a genocide in some cases.

Another peculiarity of the security situation in the Horn is the regional character of the security conundrum. The history of inter-state conflicts in the region already proves that tensions run high between the neighbouring countries in the Horn. The inter-state wars are in fact part of a much longer list of skirmishes and border disputes that have been taking place in the region. The existing tension among the countries of the Horn can also be seen through the support these states provide to each other's rebel groups. Therefore, even intra-state conflicts often have a regional character because of the (more or less) tacit support to various armed groups. In fact, the countries of the Horn have a long tradition of playing out their differences through proxies. These proxy wars may

¹ For this paper the Horn of Africa includes all the countries that are members of IGAD (including Eritrea). This follows from the practice adopted by the EU itself.

even take place in a third country as has been the case for Somalia, for example, where Ethiopia and Eritrea have been settling scores by providing support to opposing factions battling in the streets of Mogadishu and the rest of Somalia. These regional tensions are further fuelled by the fact that conflicts often tend to spill over borders and affect neighbouring states. As such, the LRA rebellion that was waged in Northern Uganda soon proved to be of major and direct concern for its close neighbours such as Sudan.

The conflicts that have affected the Horn have also fuelled other security issues. The region in general is awash with arms, in particular small arms and light weapons (SALW) which are in the hands of various militias and rebel groups. This has led to a situation where armed criminality is high and affects the daily lives of a large number of the population. This criminality is also of concern for actors outside of the Horn. The rise in piracy attacks along the Somali coastline makes it difficult for the rest of the world to just ignore the security predicaments of the Horn, a strategic region as the gateway to the Gulf and the Mediterranean. The European Union (EU) itself has responded to the threat posed by the Somali pirates by launching its very first naval European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) mission with the deployment of EUNAVFOR Atalanta in 2007.

However, the EU's involvement in the region is far more ranging than the sole Atalanta mission. In fact, the EU has been engaged in the Horn for many years before deploying its ships in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. This EU engagement has been multifaceted, ranging from European Commission's delegations in the different capitals of the Horn, to EU Troika meetings with the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the regional organisation of the Horn of Africa. Similarly, the activities undertaken by the EU to address some of the security issues affecting the Horn have been numerous and very diverse, involving among other things mediation, support to peace settlement, attempts at governance improvement and training of security personnel.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the EU's dealing with the security problem of the Horn and try to understand how it aims to address the different security issues affecting the Horn by adopting a regional approach. This paper will thus undertake an analysis of the EU's security discourse and practices on the Horn to understand how the EU constructs and understands the security dilemma of conflicts with regional dimensions and how it tries to respond to these challenges. The Horn of Africa offers an interesting case study in this regard because of the different security issues that exist in the region, and also because it has been chosen by the EU to be the test-case for the implementation of the Africa-EU partnership.

The first part of the paper briefly examines the more general approach that the EU has towards regional conflicts since it has tried to become an important actor in international peace and security. More specific attention will be given to the EU's interest in African regional conflicts and African security predicaments in general. The second part explores the evolution of the EU's involvement in the security situation in the Horn and by focussing on the situation during the last decade. In the third part, a more descriptive and analytical approach will highlight the reasons behind the EU's engagement with the security predicaments of the Horn of Africa by looking more closely into the discourses of the EU regarding the region and the ensuing construction of its views on the conflict and the response needed.

The EU and African regional conflicts

The issue of regional conflict has been the subject of growing academic attention since the 1990s. The fact that conflicts do not only affect the state in which they erupted in, but also have some repercussions in the neighbouring countries, has been the focus of large amounts of research in the fields of IR and peace and war studies. The elaboration of the concept of 'regional security complexes' by Barry Buzan has highlighted how the security of a state and its people may be closely linked to the security situation in the rest of the region (Buzan, Waever & de Wilde 1998; Buzan & Waever 2003). In parallel, the increasing involvement of regional organisations in conflict situations has emphasised the idea that conflicts need to be understood in a broader regional context and that they can no longer be dealt with by only addressing the local or national levels. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) intervention in the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia in the 1990s clearly showed how the spill over risk threatened the entire region and therefore called for a regional response (Mortimer 2000; Adebajo 2002).

The EU has also become increasingly interested in the issue of regional conflicts since it embarked on the task of becoming an international security actor. In fact, even before venturing into the world of international peace and security, the EU already had a long tradition of engaging the rest of the world through the regional level (Aggarwal & Fogarty 2004; Hänggi 2006; Söderbaum & Van Langenhove 2006). The EU had as such established several cooperation frameworks and agreements with a regional dimension. These were both with existing regional organisations and with group of states of the same geographical region. In the field of security, the EU showed its interest in being involved in the resolution of conflicts that had a regional dimension. Given its proximity and therefore its direct implication on European security, the Balkan region was one of

the first areas of concern for the EU. Further away from its borders, the EU was also closely involved and interested in resolving the conflicts in the Middle East and in the African Great Lakes region. The appointment of EU special representatives for these conflicts testifies to the EU's willingness to engage in the peaceful settlement of the conflicts. Moreover, the involvement not only included EU institutions but also often involved member states that played central roles.

More formally, the issue of 'Regional conflicts' was recognised in 2003 in the European Security Strategy (ESS) as one of the key threats the EU needed to address (Council 2003: 4). In doing so, the EU clearly established that regional stability even outside its own borders was tantamount to the EU's own security. In addition, it recognised the deadly impact that regional conflicts can have on the local population and how the destruction of the infrastructure endangered stability (Council 2003: 4). Going further, in the views expressed in the ESS, the very existence of regional conflicts could fuel other threats such as terrorism, organised crimes and encourage the violation of human rights. It therefore considered that tackling regional conflicts would also help to solve other security threats. The ESS thus states 'the most practical way to tackle the often elusive new threats will sometimes be to deal with the older problems of regional conflicts' (Council 2003: 4).

The EU has also shown interest in being involved in the settlement of regional conflicts in Africa. At the time when the ESS was being drafted, West Africa was slowly emerging from the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. The Great Lakes region was still in turmoil despite a shaky resolution of the conflict, while in Sudan the North-South conflict was being overshadowed by the atrocities taking place in the Darfur province. Given this troubled situation, the African continent became a large part of the focus of the EU's security attention. This attention soon translated into effective action when the EU decided to undertake one of its very first ESDP missions in the East of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (Ulriksen, Gourlay & Mace 2004). Operation Artemis, as it became known, only aimed at solving a local security threat, but marked the launch of a broader involvement of the EU in the region and more particularly in the DRC.

In parallel to this direct engagement in cases of regional conflicts, the EU also stepped up its external cooperation with African regional organisations that could play a role in peace and security. The EU was encouraged to do so by the willingness of these organisations to address conflicts taking place in their geographical areas. The already mentioned ECOWAS intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone had in fact opened the door for a greater involvement of (African) regional organisations in conflict resolution, including deploying troops as part of a peacekeeping operation. In fact, when the EU adopted the ESS and established regional conflicts as a key threat, the African

Union (AU) was in the process of institutionalising its own mechanism to address conflicts taking place on the African continent. This mechanism, known as the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), gives a key role to the AU and sub-regional organisations. The latter are tasked to establish regional stand-by brigades that could serve as peacekeeping forces and set up early warning mechanisms to prevent the emergence of new conflicts (Franke 2007; Engel & Gomes Porto 2009). The EU viewed these evolutions as encouraging signs, as it believed that it could effectively work for peace and security with like-minded regional organisations. As a result, the EU established several frameworks through which it could provide support to its African counterparts. This support included financial assistance, for example providing funds to the AU for its peacekeeping missions, capacity building, training exercises and direct high-level engagement with the regional organisations (Pirozzi 2009).

Overall, it can be said that the EU's engagement with African regional conflicts has been led by their concern regarding the consequences these conflicts entail. This of course includes the consequences for the local population, but also more broadly, the effect these conflicts have on the stability of the entire region or even the world. In fact, closely linked to the discourse on African conflicts is the issue of failed states, which appears prominently in the European security concerns (Commission 2007). The concept of failed states had already long been used to characterise the inability of some African states to resolve their socio-political and security problems. For the EU, the cases of Zaïre/DR Congo and Somalia provided vivid reminders of the risk such failed states could pose at both the regional and global levels. Regional conflicts were therefore seen as being particularly detrimental as they encouraged the formation of failed states and reduced the possibilities to bring a state out from its 'failed' situation. Failed states were also believed to help nurture various other threats, such as terrorism, migration and organised crimes that are direct concerns for the EU (Council 2003: 4).

The EU and the security conundrum of the Horn of Africa

The EU's engagement with peace and security issues in the Horn was begun through development and humanitarian assistance in the region. The countries of the Horn have been among the major development and humanitarian aid recipients of the EU. In the early 1990s, the EU still lacked a formal foreign and security policy but already showed signs of concern on such issues as bad governance, state fragility and state failure which were addressed through its development cooperation policy. At that time, the EU already understood that lack of peace and security did not

bid well for a successful socio-economic development of the Horn or for Africa in general and it aimed at taking some actions in this regard. The introduction of political conditions being tied to the delivering of development aid was a first step in this direction. As such, the EU had already included a human rights clause in the Lomé Agreement and instituted a political dialogue with Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) states to discuss socio-political and governance issues (Fierro 2003). But it was not until the end of the 1990s and early 2000s that the EU would deeply involve itself on issues pertaining to peace and security in the Horn.

Before the establishment of the ESDP, the EU lacked a proper framework to guide its actions in peace and security. At that time, the EU mainly relied on assisting existing efforts at resolving the security issues in the Horn. The EU put a particular emphasis in supporting the work of the United Nations (UN) in resolving the peace and security situation (Council 2001; Commission 2003). Based on its experience in the Great Lakes region and in the Balkans, the EU believed that the best course of action was to follow the lead of the UN. Effectively, this led the EU to set up programmes that were aimed at supporting the actions and endeavours of the UN in the region. EU officials regularly praised the close cooperation between the two institutions in this regard (Commission 2003).

This cooperation between the EU and the UN would eventually be consecrated in 2003 with the adoption of the 'Joint Declaration on collaboration with the UN on Crisis situation' and the revision of the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) that set out some practical aspects of the cooperation (Council 2003b). Accordingly, the EU committed itself to provide assistance to the work undertaken by the UN. The elements contained in the Joint Declaration would be further reinforced with the adoption of the ESS a few months later, which consecrated EU-UN cooperation (Council 2003a). The ESS, among other things, stresses the need for the EU to engage itself on the path of 'effective multilateralism' and recognises the central position of the UN in this regard. In addition, the ESS also identifies regional conflicts as one of the key security issues that can represent a threat to the EU and to global stability. The EU also stresses that the primary response for resolving regional conflicts needs to be a political one rather than a military one (Council 2003a: 4). At the same time, the EU also recognised the need for close cooperation with other regional organisations in this regard.

The EU was also encouraged to collaborate with regional organisations in Africa, given the positive signs it received from these organisations that in the early 2000s started showing a strong commitment in peace and security issues. The strongest signal in this regard, was the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the AU and its adoption of the right

to intervene in cases of internal conflict and severe human rights violations. More generally, the AU was in the process of establishing itself as a strong and credible peace and security actor led by the ideal of providing African solutions to African problems (Murithi 2005). And in this endeavour, the AU was benefitting from the support of several international actors – among whom the EU – which all backed the pan-African effort at resolving the peace and security issues of the continent. As part of this effort, the AU soon adopted and institutionalised the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). With the APSA, the AU becomes an essential actor in resolving conflicts in Africa notably through the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC), which even has the authority to impose sanctions on member states (Makinda & Okumu 2008). The APSA also relies very much on the participation of regional economic communities (RECs) such as ECOWAS, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which are entrusted to establish regional stand-by brigades that are to serve as peacekeeping forces (Franke 2007; Engel & Gomes Porto 2009; 2010). For East Africa, IGAD was designated for coordinating the establishment of the EASBRIG, the East African Stand-by Brigade. Eventually the task was undertaken by an ad hoc structure known as EASBRICOM.

IGAD itself has been active in what concerns efforts in resolving peace and security issues in the Horn (Adar 2000; Apuuli 2004, Terlinden 2004). In fact, IGAD had preceded the AU in adopting a protocol for establishing a conflict early warning and response mechanism. And by 2003 IGAD had already inaugurated its first Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism (CEWARN) Unit in Addis Ababa showing the renewed commitment of the regional organisation after the lull caused by the Ethio-Eritrean conflict. IGAD's contribution to the stabilisation of the region was particularly notable in its involvement in the peace processes of two of the long lasting conflicts being waged in the Horn (Terlinden 2004, Woodward 2004, Murithi 2009). In regard to Sudan, IGAD established a specific 'Secretariat on Peace in Sudan' spearheaded by Kenya to try to broker a peace agreement between Khartoum and the SPLM/A. This effort eventually proved to be successful as it managed to bring both parties to agree on the Machakos Protocol, which would eventually pave the way for the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between North and South Sudan in 2005 (Murithi 2009: 144-145). In parallel, IGAD also led the way in the case of Somalia. The regional organisation delegated the lead for the negotiations to Ethiopia, which pushed the Somali parties involved in the talks to agree on a Transitional Federal Charter of the Somali Republic and led to the establishment of the Transitional Federal Institutions. This process allowed for the creation of an internationally recognised Transitional Federal Government (TFG) which began working in exile in Kenya before moving to a temporary capital in Somalia (Murithi 2009: 147).

The EU positively viewed this engagement with the African regional organisations on peace and security issues in the Horn. Soon enough, the EU decided to deepen its cooperation with these organisations and help them attain stability in the region. Moreover, the EU acknowledged that it could provide different kinds of support to its African counterparts in order to strengthen their capacity to act in favour of peace and security. In that view, the EU established with the AU the African Peace Facility as a way to channel the funds made available to the AU in order to facilitate the establishment and operationalisation of the APSA (Commission 2004). Through this funding facility, the EU made various financial commitments, including capacity building projects and funding of AU's peacekeeping operations. By using this African Peace Facility, the EU provided financial backing for the deployment of the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS). EU's support to AU's missions also covered more technical aspects, such as the provision of an EU civilian-military action in support of AMIS, which as at the request of the AU (Council 2005a). As such, the EU made available equipment and assets to AU troops and also provided planning and technical assistance through its military observers working with the AU. Following the outbreak of the Darfur conflict, the EU also supported the AU's effort to mediate the crisis. From the onset, the EU recognised the leadership of the AU in the negotiation process and decided to back its effort at finding an agreement between the Darfur rebels and the Khartoum government (Franke 2009: 257). For this purpose, the recently appointed Special Representative on Sudan of the High Representative played a key role in representing the EU during the different steps of the negotiation process such as the Abuja talks (Council 2005b).

The EU followed somewhat the same course in its collaboration with IGAD. With this regional organisation, the EU tried to engage at the highest level in order to facilitate the cooperation between the two organisations. The EU's support has also ranged from providing funds for peace and security programmes to making available technical assistance in various forms. To facilitate its cooperation with IGAD, the EU also made use of the existing IGAD Partners Forum that had previously been established by IGAD and its external partners in order to better channel its external funding. The European Commission, as well as several EU member states are taking part in this IGAD Partner Forum and have, through this facility, supported IGAD's work in peace and security (Raffaelli 2007: 124). The EU has reinforced its collaboration with its Horn of Africa counterpart by establishing the EU-IGAD Troika meetings, which bring together the IGAD Secretary General and its chairperson of the council of ministers and for the EU representatives of the presidency of the Council, of the Commission and of the EU Special Representative (EUSR). In addition, the EU has backed the different peace processes that have been undertaken by IGAD in the

region (Gibert 2006). For example, the EU made funds available to help establish and strengthen the Transitional Federal Institutions in Somalia. Similarly, the EU closely monitored the IGAD-led negotiation process that led to the signing of the CPA, eventually becoming one of the guarantors of the agreement.

The EU's engagement with the African continent was further boosted by the adoption in 2007 of the Africa-EU strategic partnership, which includes peace and security as one of its main chapters. From the European side, the signing of this partnership was motivated by the EU's willingness to deepen and broaden its cooperation with the African continent. The existing agreements up until then were limited both in scope and geographically. For example, the Cotonou agreement only covered sub-Saharan Africa and is mainly a trade and development agreement that does not leave much room for peace and security issues. Therefore, the Africa-EU strategic partnership offered a unique opportunity to engage more comprehensively with the continent as a whole. The partnership also allowed both sides to agree on measures to deal with security issues that involve or threaten the two parties. The inclusion of a specific chapter dedicated to cooperation on peace and security also laid the groundwork for EU's cooperation in these matters with African states and regional organisations. The partnership offers a framework that is to guide the EU's actions in peace and security matters in or involving Africa. It also marks an important step forward in the EU's engagement with peace and security issues in Africa, as it is the first major document for peace and security in a cooperation agreement with the African continent. Up until then, the EU's involvement had been mainly based on an ad hoc basis without a common framework to work under. The document signed between the EU and African states upheld the ideal of a partnership among equals, meaning that actions and commitments needed to be made on both sides of the Mediterranean. More concretely, the Africa-EU partnership stresses the fact that the EU has to support African initiatives in peace and security rather than imposing its own agenda on African countries.

In fact, the Horn of Africa became the first region to see the EU adopt a specific framework to deal with the peace and security issues. It thus became "a test case for applying the EU-Africa Strategy" (Commission 2006: 4). Whereas the EU already made some progress in the various fields mentioned in the Partnership, it recognised the need to establish a clear strategy to engage with the different regions of Africa and the specific problems they encountered. Therefore, the EU prepared various documents that laid the groundwork for coordinating its policy in regard to the Horn. This process dovetailed the establishment of the Africa-EU partnership and aimed at reinforcing it. As

such, in 2006 the Commission produced a Communication on an EU Regional Political Partnership for Peace, Security and Development in the Horn of Africa. (Commission 2006) This Communication not only outlined the need for solving the peace and security problems of the Horn, but it also highlighted the strategic importance of the region for the EU. The Commission's views were further strengthened by the European Parliament's report on the Horn of Africa of 2007, which stressed the need for the EU to profoundly engage with the Horn of Africa region in order to help bring peace and stability (European Parliament 2007). Eventually this led to the adoption in 2009 by the Council of the document 'An EU Policy on the Horn of Africa – towards a comprehensive EU strategy' (Council 2009).

This new EU strategy for the Horn sets out several points that need to be addressed by the EU. Most importantly is the need to find a political solution for the region as a whole rather than providing band-aid solutions to conflicts and security problems taken in isolation. From the Commission's Communication up to the Council's EU strategy, it was made clear that the EU viewed the different security issues affecting the Horn as being closely interlinked and involving the entire region. Therefore, it was believed that to resolve these problems a broad approach involving the region together was necessary, including cooperation with the existing regional organisation covering that part of the world (Council 2009: 17). It thus considered that "Increasing the capacity and political commitment of the AU, IGAD and other sub-regional organisations to play a key role in regional stabilisation is a high priority in the regional partnership" (Commission 2006: 8). The several documents emanating from the EU institutions clearly establish that the situation in the Horn can be understood as a regional conflict more or less defined in the 2003 ESS (Commission 2006: 5-6; European Parliament 2007: 5; Council 2009: 7-8) .

Moreover, the new EU strategy for the Horn identifies different threats that are linked to the regional conflict and are of concern for the EU and directly threaten Europe. The Strategy for the Horn, prepared by the Council, recognises that "A prosperous, democratic, stable and secure region, in which respect for human rights and international humanitarian law is ensured, is in the strategic interest of both EU and the countries in the Horn" (Council 2009: 4). In particular, the EU identified migration, terrorism and criminalisation (such as piracy) as threats that have flourished from the fragility of the states in the Horn (Commission 2006: 6-8). Regarding migration, the EU has been concerned by the number of refugees in the region and the growing numbers that have tried to enter the EU (Commission 2006: 7; Council 2009: 5). The rising profile of Al Shabab in Somalia since 2007 and their apparent radicalisation, together with their claimed linkages with Al Qaeda,

also fuelled the EU's fears that the Horn (and in particular Somalia) could serve as a breeding ground for terrorists. It was also feared that the lack of a strong government in Somalia and the somewhat anarchical situation in the country could offer some safe-haven to terrorist groups. It is clear that threats posed by criminalisation only came about later as a major issue and in fact, it only appears as such in the Council's document from 2009². This is easily understandable given that the problem posed by the Somali pirates only rose to prominence after the surge in pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden in 2007. The high-jacking of ships navigating along the Somali coast threatened to affect international trade with the EU because it not only disrupted the important flows from the Persian Gulf, but also disturbed the vital route to the Mediterranean. Moreover, after the MV Faina episode when Pirates seized a ship containing heavy weaponry including tanks, a major concern for the EU and other international actors became making sure that ships and their shipments did not fall in the wrong hands (Helly 2009: 394).

Eventually, the EU decided to respond more directly to the threat posed by piracy by deploying its very first maritime ESDP mission (Germond & Smith 2009; Helly 2009). This mission known as EUNAVFOR Atalanta was launched following the UN request for a maritime force to be deployed in order to secure the World Food Program (WFP) shipments in the region (Council 2008). The EU promptly reacted to this request with the deployment of a naval force that was to patrol the areas along the Somali coast to prevent further pirate attacks. Another aim of the Atalanta mission was to better coordinate the European response to the piracy threat as some European member states had already taken some independent action in this regard (Helly 2009). Moreover, the Atalanta mission also collaborated with a variety of other international actors involved in the patrolling of the Gulf of Aden and parts of the Indian Ocean. Among others, the EU mission collaborates with the US-led Combined Task-Force 150 (CTF-150), which has been mandated to help in the fight against the Somali pirates (EUNAVFOR 2010a). Other countries such as Russia, India and China have taken part in this operation while some EU member states such as France, the Netherlands, UK and Denmark have participated in the CTF-150 alongside the US Navy.

However, the fight against piracy in the Gulf of Aden soon proved to need more far ranging solutions that the patrolling ships alone could not provide. Among other things, the states partaking in the naval operation were soon met with a juridical conundrum concerning the trying of the pirates that they seized in the high seas. The ineffectual state of the judicial system in Somalia made it impossible to judge the pirates arrested by the different patrols. The possibility of judging the

² However, the issue of Piracy had already been mentioned in the 2008 review of the ESS (Council 2008)

pirates in the country that had seized them was another solution, but it was soon considered as being both impractical and counterproductive. From the EU's side, it was much more interesting to find a way to judge the pirates still within the region of the Horn if not in Somalia. As such, the EU High Representative (EUHR) Catherine Ashton paid a visit to Nairobi to try to convince Kenyan authorities to accept putting the Atalanta-seized pirates on trial in Kenya (EUNAVFOR 2010b). To the dismay of the EU, Kenya only accepted to do so to a limited extent and European countries have had to accept to trying Somali Pirates in their own countries (BBC News 2010).

But the piracy problem also directed the international attention to the situation in Somalia. The EU itself recognised that the answer to the piracy problem in the region was not to be found in the seas but in the interior of Somalia (Council 2010a). The EU therefore decided to step up its efforts to find a more sustainable situation in Somalia. For this purpose, the EU increased its support to the ongoing efforts of IGAD and the AU in regard to Somalia, and most notably to the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) force that has been deployed in Mogadishu. In addition, the EU also decided to provide some support to the Somali TFG by propping up its security forces. The European Commission adopted a large scale support programme which included, together with the provision of humanitarian aid, various measures to improve the governance in Somalia (Commission 2009). In parallel, the EU also decided to help in the training of troops of the TFG by financing trainings and making military advisors available for this purpose (Council 2010b; 2010c). Moreover, this endeavour was undertaken in a truly regional way as the trainings have taken place in other countries of the Horn, namely Djibouti and Uganda (EUTM 2010).

Constructing a regional peace and security framework for the Horn of Africa

In order to fully understand the various forms of EU's engagement with the peace and security issues in the Horn of Africa it is necessary to take a step back and look into the ways the EU has constructed and conceives the security situation of the Horn. The discourse and practice of the EU regarding the region offer some useful indications that can help explain why certain aspects have been given more attention than others. Among the most important points is the way the EU identifies the different security issues that are at stake in the Horn and how they relate to the EU's own security. Concerning the Horn of Africa more specifically, the EU's attention has mostly focused on the issues of conflicts, borders, migration, and terrorism as well as criminalisation and piracy.

Given the conflict history of the Horn and the fact that there are still latent and active conflicts in the region, it comes as no surprise that the EU has identified this issue as an essential one. Moreover, the EU's concern is on inter-state as well as intra-state conflicts, recognising the destructive capacity of both. The EU is also conscious that in the Horn, even conflicts that have seemingly been resolved may in fact resurface because of the difficulty of upholding shaky peace agreements and that "Mediation does not come to an end with signatures on peace accord. Implementation might be an even harder challenge. International engagement must follow the process until it is sustainable" (Council 2009: 9). As one of the guarantors of the Algiers Agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea and of the CPA in Sudan, the EU is indeed well placed to directly see the difficulty of implementing the different provisions of these agreements given the persistence of tensions and the somewhat reluctant signatory parties (Council 2009: 10). Therefore, the EU does not view conflicts in the Horn as being something from the past but rather a threat for the present and the near-future. The post-referendum future of Sudan is, among other things, of particular concern for the EU regarding the stability of the region. In addition, the EU has also expressed its concern regarding the continuing existence of rebel groups operating for a large part at the periphery of the states in the Horn of Africa. The Darfur situation in Western Sudan, the LRA rebellion in Northern Uganda and the situation in the Ogaden in Southeastern Ethiopia have all been quoted by the EU as elements that could threaten the peace and security in the entire region and even further (Council 2009: 7).

This concern about the rebel groups operating at the margins of the Horn of African states is also closely linked to the EU's concern with the porosity of borders in this part of the world. The EU is of course aware that the demarcation of international borders in the Horn is a very problematic and disputed issue (Commission 2006: 6; Council 2009: 11). However, one of its main concerns is the existence of various rebel groups that make use of the porosity of borders to their strategic advantage. This could become a major threat, especially if the rebel groups benefit from the support of a neighbouring state (Commission 2006: 6). As such, the EU sees the fragility of borders as being particularly detrimental to the security situation and stability of the Horn. The inability of the states in the region to control their borders is seen by the EU as increasing the risk of having these borders used for illegal and criminal activities. The EU mentions the fact that such a situation can favour the proliferation of criminal activities, such as trafficking in goods or even human beings (Commission 2006: 8). From a European perspective, lack of control at the borders also puts a dent in its attempts at curtailing migration to the EU. In that sense, it is feared that such porous borders

facilitate migration and the possibility for people from the region to flee and try to reach EU borders.

Another threat that is of direct concern to the EU is the one posed by the emergence of terrorist groups in the Horn of Africa. Whereas the Horn has already witnessed terrorist activities in the past (such as the attacks in Nairobi and Dar es-Salaam in August 1998), it is the international connection of terrorism in the region, and in particular Somalia, that has attracted the attention of European authorities. Most importantly, the rising profile of the Al Shabab group, which became active in Somalia in 2006-2007, sent up signals on the EU's radar. For the European states, the fact that some of them harboured important Somali migrant communities raised some concerns regarding the possibility of suffering an attack by members of these communities (Council 2009: 5). The fact that some of the initiators of the terrorist attacks in London in 2005 were originally from the Horn, served as a reminder of the importance of monitoring the terrorist threat in the region. Rightly so, the EU includes Somalia as one of the hot spots under review in its annual EU Terrorism Situation and Trend Report (TE-SAT 2010). Moreover, the EU has also used its relations with the different actors in the region to try to address that issue, for example by supporting the work being undertaken by the IGAD counter-terrorism initiative known as ICPAT.

One of the more recent major security concerns for the EU has been the criminalisation trends that have affected the Horn of Africa. In the EU's views, since the region is awash with SALW and that many former rebels, militiamen and soldiers still roam around the region, there is a risk that they may turn to criminal activities. The Council document outlining the EU's policy towards the Horn highlights the fact that badly resolved conflicts where the root cause remains unaffected, create a situation where recourse to violence for extracting resources is a real threat to the stability of the region. "Unaddressed, root causes give birth to rebel movements and provide fertile ground for violence to turn increasingly criminalised (Darfur; Somalia; Uganda/Lord's Resistance Army)" (Council 2009:7). Following the increase in pirate attacks along the Somali coast in 2006 and in 2007, the attention of the EU regarding the criminalisation threat has shifted towards the challenge of combating piracy activities. The EU became directly engaged in this regard with the deployment of the NAVFOR Atalanta. The EU also expressed a similar concern about the criminalisation of the violence in Darfur (Council 2009:7).

Apart from the security issues posed by conflicts, porous border, terrorism and criminalisation, the EU's assessment of the security situation in the Horn also touches on several other aspects including the low development levels of the countries in the region and their somewhat unstable

political situations. In fact, it is only possible to understand the EU's conceptualisation of the security problematic of the region by taking into account the way that the EU considers the states in the region. It is very clear that one of the main issues that the EU is concerned about is the fragility of the states in the Horn. In fact, the issue of failed states and the threat they may pose to international security has been recognised by the EU. The ESS for example clearly states that the EU must be ready to intervene even militarily to address the problems of failed states (Council 2003: 4). The European Commission has also shown its concern about failed states and has even made it the focus of its 2009 development report. For the Horn, the EU's policy concerning failed states is of major importance, given the existence of Somalia, which is the archetypical failed state and the future prospect of South Sudan. But also, it is apparent in EU's discourses about the countries of the Horn, that it sees the threat of these states failing as being very real and of concern for Europe (Council 2009:13).

In addition to the EU's concern about failed states and failing states in the Horn, it is also necessary to take into account the importance of the European discourse about governance. The concept of governance has been used across several EU institutions to point out some of the socio-economic failures of the developing countries (Hout 2010). As such, the EU's reading of the current situation in the Horn of Africa is very much informed by its take on the governance of the state in the region. As stated in the Commission's Communication on the Horn, "A crucial issue in reducing instability in the Horn of Africa is to address the mutually reinforcing connections between insecurity, poverty and governance" (Commission 2006: 6). The EU is in particular concerned with the adoption of what it considers negative policies for economic development by the governments in the Horn. Another area of concern is the lack of democratic accountability and the continuation of 'bad governance'. As such, the Council's Strategy considers that the EU should "take a comprehensive approach to the upcoming elections in the Horn. This includes how to handle their possible postponement and derailment, which might jeopardise peace and security in the countries concerned and beyond" (Council 2009: 11). The EU stresses in the various documents that it has adopted to form its policy on the Horn, such issues as marginalisation and unequal distribution of resources as examples of bad policies being adopted and implemented (Council 2009: 7; Commission 2006: 7). For the EU, this combination of events is believed to have been one of the main causes to the instability of the region and thus have direct consequences on security for the region and also for the EU and other parts of the world.

The EU's approach on the security problems and the socio-political situation of the Horn has also been changed since the 2006 Communication of the Commission. Up until then, the EU had mainly focused on bilateral approaches to try to solve some of the peace and security issues that were affecting the countries in the Horn. The Communication, on the other hand, highlights the very regional dimension of the security issues and the need that addressing these issues "require regional solutions with cross-border and transnational components that complement appropriate national responses" (2006: 6). The Commission position was in reality built upon its earlier adoption of a Horn of Africa initiative that came about from its collaboration with IGAD. It is also for this reason that the Commission, and later on the Parliament and the Council, defined the Horn of Africa as being composed by the countries that are members of IGAD³.

One of the main reasons why the Commission has opted for a regional approach to deal with the situation in the Horn is its belief that the security issues that are prevalent in the Horn are closely interlinked and there are several other cross-cutting issues that all the states in the region need to address. In the words of the Commission, "The Horn face not a series of separate conflicts, but a **regional system of insecurity** in which conflicts and political crises, feed into and fuel one another" (emphasis in original) (Commission 2006: 6). The same analysis can also be found in the Parliament's Report and the Council's Strategy, both stressing the negative impact that neighbouring countries interference can have on intra-state conflicts (European Parliament 2007: 5; Council 2009: 8). But in terms of security issues, it is not only conflicts that are seen as having a regional dimension.

In fact, the EU considers that other security issues such as border controls, distribution of resources or even migration need to be addressed by engaging the region as a whole rather than through bilateral relations. Similarly, the EU stresses that countries of the Horn need to be dealt with as a group in order to respond to threats that have an international character. In this regard, the EU mentions, among others, the threats posed by climate change, environmental degradation, weak governance and failed states, as well as terrorism and migration (Commission 2006: 5-8). And it is in fact the combination of all these factors that makes the Horn of Africa a real case of regional conflict as defined by the European Security Strategy of 2003. "Violent or frozen conflicts (...) threaten regional stability. They destroy human lives and social and physical infrastructures; they

³ Since then, Eritrea has pulled out of IGAD because of disagreements with the position of the regional organization. Nevertheless, the EU has been trying to convince Eritrea to rejoin IGAD.

threaten minorities, fundamental freedoms and human rights. Conflict can lead to extremism, terrorism and state failure; it provides opportunities for organised crime” (Council 2003: 4).

But apart from these discourses that define the Horn as a case of regional conflict, the EU’s practice of engaging with regional actors in the Horn also further stresses the regional character of its approach. As mentioned earlier, the EU has been particularly eager to collaborate with some regional counterparts in the different parts of the world. This eagerness has been also very significant when it comes to the challenge of addressing peace and security issues. And in this regard, the EU has been particularly active trying to establish some profound collaboration frameworks with the African regional organisations. It is as part of this process that the EU has been engaging with both the African Union and IGAD when it concerns the Horn of Africa. As such, the EU has been supporting the AU’s efforts to find a solution to the situation in Somalia and most notably it has provided funds for the AMISOM and AMIS missions and set up a framework for the training of the troops of the TFG (Franke 2009). Similarly, with IGAD, the EU has provided the Horn of Africa regional organisation with funding for its programmes addressing peace and security issues and has also assisted it during the negotiation process over Sudan and Somalia. The EU is still hoping to further its relationship and cooperation with both IGAD and the AU as they are seen as key actors for providing a regional solution to the regional problems of the Horn. As such, the Commission’s Communication considered that “Increasing the capacity and political commitment of the AU, IGAD and other sub-regional organisations to play a key role in regional stabilisation is a high priority in the regional partnership” (Commission 2006: 8).

The EU’s policy of collaborating with regional organisations such as the AU and IGAD is based on the idea that they are best suited to address peace and security problems that are within their regional scope. In that sense, the EU is led by the belief that these organisations are well suited to become the main actors to find a solution as they have a better knowledge of the local situation and already engage with the countries in the region. However, in doing so, the EU has come to realise that these regional organisations are not without problems of their own. Among others, one of the major hurdles to the effective engagement of AU’s and IGAD’s institutions is their structural weaknesses. Neither IGAD nor the AU have at their disposal the human and financial resources that are available to the EU institutions (Tavares 2009). Therefore, the scale of the work they can undertake is much lower than what the ambitions of the EU may be. The EU is of course very aware of this problem and has tried to engage with these regional organisations in such ways that they could be strengthened. It is for this reason that the EU has been funding the AU and some of the

programmes being undertaken by the panafrican organisation. But it is also interesting to note that the EU remains concerned by the capacity of these regional organisations to be really effective and tries to adopt approaches that the EU believes are more likely to be successful. It is as such that the Council's strategy for the Horn underlines the need to "review and assess advantages of the regional organisations, covering the whole or parts of Horn of Africa and prioritise EU engagement with relevant entities accordingly" (Council 2009: 18).

This concern about the capacity and effectiveness of the regional organisations of the Horn reveal the EU's dependence on the agreement and collaboration of the local actors. When engaging with organisations such as IGAD or the AU, the EU has had to realise that it was unable to dictate the terms of its engagement and that it could not effectively impose its own peace and security agenda on the countries of the Horn. A clear case of such a situation can be seen by the Eritrean decision to suspend its membership in IGAD. One of the main reasons why the EU had tried to collaborate with IGAD was the fact that it was the only regional organisation of which all the countries of the Horn are a member of. Therefore, the decision by Eritrea to withdraw from the regional organisation has been a backlash for the European attempts at engaging the region as a whole. The EU has been trying to push Eritrea to resume its IGAD membership as it is considered essential for maintaining its course of action in regard to peace and security in the Horn. Similarly, the EU has been greatly distraught by the AU's decision to reject the International Criminal Court's (ICC) indictment of Sudan's president Omar al-Bashir. Whereas the EU believed that the Court's action could provide a solution to the conflict in Darfur by putting an end to the lack of judicial accountability, the AU was on the contrary of the belief that such a move was detrimental to the finding of a peace agreement in the western province of Sudan. These two examples illustrates the difficulty that the EU has in getting the countries and the regional organisations in the Horn to adopt its line of action. In fact, the Strategy for the Horn adopted by the Council recognises this problem and stresses the need for the EU to maximise the effectiveness of its cooperation with local actors and the need to "improve its leverage in the Horn and use it more effectively, building on both its significant volume of development assistance and its political engagement through the Cotonou Agreement, including Article 8 dialogues, and partnership with regional actors such as the AU, IGAD and others" (Council 2009:15).

The fact that in the above quote the EU stresses its involvement in terms of the development aid it is providing in the Horn of Africa serves as a reminder of the importance that the EU gives to this aspect of its foreign policy. Moreover, in the EU's view, the issue of development is not to be

completely separated from questions related to peace and security (Faust & Messner 2005; Bagayoko & Gibert 2007). In fact, in several cases the EU has interlinked the two issues of security and development led by the belief that an improvement in the latter could help better guarantee the former. This security-development nexus was to be consecrated in the 2008 review of the ESS, which clearly stated that the EU needed to engage with development issues as part of its security policy. "Conflict is often linked to state fragility. Countries like Somalia are caught in a vicious cycle of weak governance and recurring conflict. We have sought to break this, both through development assistance and measures to ensure better security" (Council 2008: 8). In what concerns the Horn of Africa, and its very low level of development, the issue of development easily integrated the security discourse of the EU.

The interlinking of security and development in the Horn is visible at different points in the EU's analysis of the situation. One of the main aspects of the security-development nexus is the reading of the security problems as having their origins in the lack of development, which affects the countries in the region. For example, both the Commission's Communication and the Council's Strategy document consider that one of the main roots of conflicts in the Horn is the problem of resource distribution and the fact that part of the population is being marginalised (Commission 2006: 5-8; Council 2009: 7). The EU thus believes that "Sudden crises which arise in the Horn, ranging from the upsurge in piracy to the acute food security situation, are often rooted in structural factors, such as protracted state fragility, frozen conflicts and a development deficit" (Council 2009: 4). In this regard, the EU also underlines the fact that differences in livelihoods, especially concerning pastoral population, also favour the emergence of conflicts. This European discourse about the lack of development in the region as source of insecurity has to be linked to the earlier mentioned EU concern about failed states. In the point of view of the EU, the situation in the Horn is the result of a combination of bad governance, weak state capacity and in certain cases the existence of failed states. These factors are seen as particularly detrimental to the socio-economic development of the countries of the region. According to the Council's Strategy for the Horn, "The vicious circle for the Horn lies in conflicts perpetuating development decline, forced displacement and migration as well as fading trust in the benign state – all aspects which, while in the first place being effects of conflict, quite likely give cause to renewed conflict" (Council 2009: 7).

Following this approach, the EU considers that a way to improve the security in the region is to address the root causes by focusing on the issues of poverty and lack of development. This is the other side of the security-development nexus where providing development is an answer to

security problems (Stern & Öjendal 2010). And the EU very much ascribes to this view as it is led by the belief that improving the livelihood of the local populations is likely to reduce the threats of conflict, criminalisation, migration and other security issues. As a result, part of the EU's security engagement with the countries of the Horn can be found in its development aid policy. For example, the EU's projects aiming at improving governance or the respect of human rights, needs to be understood as being part of the European attempts at stabilising and 'normalising' the region. The 2009 European Report on Development for example stated that "Fragile states are often plagued by insecurity. The cornerstone of resilience and stability is security – and the EU has played and can continue to play a pivotal road in this domain" (ERD 2009: 15).

Another reason why the development aspect has an important role in the EU security analysis of the situation in the Horn of Africa has to do with the fact that the EU also wishes to appear as a benevolent actor on the international scene. The EU is eager to distinguish itself in the international community for having as its main concerns the livelihood of the population and being a 'force for good' (Dunne 2008; Barbé & Johansson-Nogués 2008). The EU prides itself in being one of the most important providers of development aid to developing countries. And as such, it also considers that without security there is no possibility for sustainable development. This is the third aspect of the security-development nexus where the EU believes that "Security is a precondition for development" (ESS 2003: 2). It is therefore the very image of the EU as a provider of effective development that is at stake if security is not guaranteed in the countries to which it provides its development aid. This has been particularly evident in the EU's concern regarding the capacity to deliver humanitarian aid in an insecure environment. In fact, one of the first mandates of the Atalanta mission is to protect the WFP shipments that are delivering humanitarian aid to Somalia (Council 2008).

Conclusion

The EU has had a long lasting relationship with Africa and from the earliest point of the European integration process the EU has tried to engage with a variety of actors on the African continent. However, until recently most of the agreements signed covered trade and development whereas security issues were conspicuously left out. But with the entry of the EU in the realm of international peace and security and its affirmed willingness to become a credible actor in this regard, the EU has been increasingly looking towards the African continent for pushing forward its peace and security policy. One of the first elements was the Artemis operation in eastern DRC,

which opened the way for further deployment of EU's ESDP missions in different parts of the world. The EU also engaged with the African continent more profoundly with the signing of the Africa-EU strategic partnership which covers among other things peace and security issues.

The EU has been particularly interested in pushing forward the points raised in the Africa-EU strategic partnership. On peace and security, the Horn of Africa soon appeared as a region that required particular attention given the intricacies of the security issues at play and the geopolitical importance of the region. In fact, the Horn has long been a conflict prone region where in the last decades both intra-state and inter-state conflicts have taken place. Moreover, the conflicts in the Horn often have a regional undertone and the security consequences are felt throughout the region and beyond. Apart from conflicts, the Horn also faces several other security issues such as human rights violations, terrorism, criminalisation, and migration flows that have the potential to further destabilise the region and affect the rest of the world. The risks that an unstable and un-secured Horn pose to the EU therefore justifies the EU's engagement with the region.

And indeed, the EU has in the last years been proactively trying to define a framework for its policy on the Horn of Africa and its security concerns. The process was essentially launched by the European Commission, through the publication of a Communication outlining the need for a European regional strategy on the Horn. This process also dovetailed the broader engagement of the EU with the African continent and such a regional partnership was expected to serve as a test case for other similar partnerships with the other regions of Africa. Eventually, the Commission's call was taken up by the Council, which adopted a document outlining the EU policy on the Horn of Africa in 2009.

The analysis of the EU's discourse regarding the security situation in the Horn offers some valuable information to understand the approach it has adopted towards this region. One of the most important points has been that the EU has taken an interest in different aspects of the security problem in the Horn. Rather than focussing on one threat only, the EU regularly underlined the fact that there were several security threats to be found in the Horn. Of course the prevalence of conflicts in the Horn ranked high in the eyes of the EU, but other issues also called for its attention. More particularly the EU has been concerned with the porosity of borders in the region and the inability of the countries in the Horn to control them. The EU believed that this favoured the spread of other threats and was detrimental to the EU's effort at ensuring its own security. For example, such issues as terrorism, migration and criminalisation (in particular piracy) were believed to be

flourishing thanks to the absence of border control in the Horn of Africa region. The threats have been characterised as being cross-border and therefore affecting the whole region and beyond.

It is clear in the EU discourse on the Horn that the EU believes in the need to provide a regional solution to what it sees as problems with a regional dimension. Accordingly, the EU's policy practice has been geared towards an engagement at the regional level which encompasses all the countries of the Horn and mobilises security/military means to address the situation in the region. This engagement has also translated in the EU's willingness to collaborate more profoundly with regional organisations involved in the Horn that can deal with peace and security issues. It is as such that the EU has agreed with the AU on a large cooperation framework which, among other things, involves the possibility for AU missions in Sudan and in Somalia to be funded by the EU. Similarly with IGAD, the EU has been supporting the efforts of the regional organisation in peace and security and in particular the mediation efforts regarding the conflicts in Sudan and in Somalia, as well as the early warning mechanism established by the organisation. But the regional dimension of the EU's involvement in the Horn can also be seen apart from the cooperation with IGAD and the AU. For example, the EU has been involved in a training mission for the Somali security forces, which has been taking place in and involved other countries of the region.

Finally, the EU has also stressed the importance of the development dimension regarding peace and security in the region at different levels. Firstly the EU considers that the low level of development in the Horn of Africa has favoured the spread of various threats and fuels the regional conflict. Secondly, the EU believes that to improve the security situation of the Horn and reduce the prevalence of threats, the response needs to include some aspects of socio-economic development for the countries and population of the region. Finally, it considers that in order to provide development to the Horn there is a need for a more secure environment. These linkages between security and development serve as reminder of the EU's relative weakness in the field of security, while it has a long established role in what concerns the provision of development aid to Africa.

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EU-GRASP

Changing Multilateralism: the EU as a Global-regional Actor in Security and Peace, or EU-GRASP in short, is an EU funded FP7 Programme. EU-GRASP aims to contribute to the analysis and articulation of the current and future role of the EU as a global actor in multilateral security governance, in a context of challenged multilateralism, where the EU aims at “effective multilateralism”. This project therefore examines the notion and practice of multilateralism in order to provide the required theoretical background for assessing the linkages between the EU’s current security activities with multi-polarism, international law, regional integration processes and the United Nations system.

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