Abstract

“A analysesng EU normative action: the example of CSDP civilian missions”

This presentation has the aim to show the relevant contribution of the European Union in the field of crisis management and state-building, through the deployment of military and civilian missions in the context of the Common security and defence policy (CSDP). Starting with the analysis of the role of the CSDP in the new Global strategy (June 2016), the paper will focus mainly on civilian missions as a concrete example of the EU peculiar way to engage in the field of crisis management. The notions of “soft power”, “civilian”, “normative” action are currently relevant and they would allow to the EU to make a tangible difference within a defined strategy and with the use of appropriate instruments.

After a general overview and description of civilian missions, the presentation will focus on the main achievements and limits of these latter, but it also tries to point out possible suggestions and solutions to increase coherence and effectiveness of EU as a peace-state building actor.

Introduction


The current international environment is affected by a general and challenging existential crisis, which has erupted in several crises and threats of different nature: energetic, economic or climate crises, terrorism, cyber attacks and so on and so forth. This type of challenges has peculiar features, namely, they cross national borders, present a multitude of non-conventional actors and menaces, and require new manners and strategies to face them. The European Union (EU) is directly implicated in this intricate scenario, both as side under threat and as security provider. As stressed in the Strategic Assessment, the document produced in the first phase (January-June 2015) of the process toward the elaboration of the new security strategy, the world where the EU is acting in, has become more connected, complex but also contested. A connected world because of the strong degree of globalisation and consequently an always more increasing human mobility and interconnection. A complex world because of the emergence of many configurations of power among multiple types of actors (states, non-state, inter-state and transnational actors) and new powers. Finally, a contested world where fragile states, instability, violence, corruption and poverty characterise EU’s neighbourhood.

The 2003 European Security Strategy (and its Implementation Report in 2008) was a first attempt to develop a sort of strategy, even if with some criticalities, such as a very broad scope, a lack of clear prioritisation, and a not specified way on how to pursue its ends (European Parliament: 2015). Both documents contributed to the discussion of the EU as a security actor with lights and shadows (Larivé 2014), “the ESS gave a basic guideline as to how the EU views security rather than some form of grand strategy as its title might suggest” (Chappell et al. 2016). Nevertheless, since 2003, times are changed: the EU experienced the enlargement of the number of its Member States, notable institutional changes occur with the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, a tragic financial and economic crisis affected EU countries, and additional phenomena and emergencies with international dimension arose, for example the Arab Springs or the refugees’ crisis. In this way, the EU aimed to
elaborate a new strategy for its external action, taking into account these transformed challenges, and at the same time its priorities, its interests and values. The Global Strategy for the European Union’s Foreign and Security Policy “Shared vision, common action: a stronger Europe” was presented in June 2016. The relevance to define an own strategy is crucial for three reasons at least: first, to allow to EU decision-makers to decide an action in response to an unpredictable event or a danger; secondly, to give a guideline about priorities and objectives of an actor, and finally, to define the EU nature and its role as an international player (Biscop 2015: 7). The definition of a strategy has the function to identify specific menaces, to fix priorities, to determine purposes and consequently, to implement policies and tools on the basis of an accurate analysis of the international context. Actually, the need for the European Union is not just to react to problems, but to foreordain a plan of action to shape events, according to its objectives.

The main purpose of the European Union Global strategy (EUGS) is to build a stronger Union, grounded in its shared values and able to promote its common interests inside and outside European borders. The EU fundamental values are identified in peace and security, prosperity, democracy and a rules based order. At the same time, these principles represent interests to protect and the European way to act at international level. Furthermore, in the EUGS, five priorities are pinpointed:

- The security of the Union itself. This term has to be considered with a multifaceted meaning: the EU must be able to enhance its efforts on defence, cybersecurity, counterterrorism, energy security, strategic communications;
- State and societal resilience to our East and South. More precisely, this means to develop a sustainable enlargement policy, a credible neighbourhood policy and an effective migration policy;
- An integrated approach to conflicts. A comprehensive way (multidimensional, multiphased, multilevel, multilateral) towards conflicts that begins from pre-emptive peace (prevention and monitoring root causes), to stabilisation and post-conflict reconstruction;
- Cooperative regional order. In a world caught between global pressures and local pushback, regional dynamics appear and it is necessary to consider forms of regional governance to better manage security concerns and to organise economic cooperation;
- Global governance 21st century. The EU commitment is for an international order based on international law, by reinforcing the UN system and multilateralism and ensuring human rights, sustainable development and access to global commons.

In order to pursue these priorities, the EU must be credible, responsive and joined up and its external action should be guided by a reconfirmed sustain to multilateralism and a reaffirmed comprehensive approach among EU policies, institutions and instruments. Nevertheless, what is more, there is a clear address for a “principled pragmatism”, that is, the EUGS outlines a path between realistic assessment of the environment and idealistic aspiration, between “dreamy idealism and unprincipled pragmatism” (Biscop 2016: 1). Therefore, awareness of the unstable and complicated reality, as well as consciousness of the European principled characteristics to act for a safer and better world.

“The Common Security and Defence Policy in the new Global Strategy”

In this general framework of the new EUGS, an important role is assigned to the Common Security and Defence Policy. In many aspects of security CSDP is relevant: from crisis management (CM), to peacebuilding, from maritime security to border protection and fight against organised crime.
Particularly, within CSDP, military and civilian missions for CM and peacebuilding have been deployed in many vulnerable contexts and with different tasks. These kind of operations “became an important tool at the EU’s disposal to deal with instability in a broader area, mainly focusing on its eastern and southern neighbourhoods, but extending beyond these into Africa and Asia” (Galantino, Freire 2015: 5). CSDP operations are the most visible activity of the EU in the international security domain, and have been the most tangible examples of the progress of CSDP as well as of EU security “actorness” (Tardy 2015: 17). In the age of 2003 Security Strategy, the European security and defence policy (the name of CSDP, before the Lisbon Treaty) was in its infancy. Actually, first civilian and military missions have been launched in the Balkans and Africa since 2003 (EU police mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Operation Concordia in Fyrom and Operation Artemis in Congo). Nowadays, sixteen missions are ongoing and the majority are civilian; as Galantino and Freire (2015: 7) highlight: “the focus on civilian peace operations, which have clearly outnumbered military missions, and where the EU has gained substantial know-how and has been recognised as an active and effective actor despite its limits, however should be underlined. The EU, through its civilian crisis management has, generally, been able to affirm itself as a stabilising intervener (…)”. This seems also to confirm the EU’s soft power nature and its willingness to participate actively and constructively in the international scene, with the objective to use civilian means (diplomacy, financial incentives, humanitarian aids etc.) and to promote multilateralism and cooperation through the interaction with other regional and international organisations, notably the UN, the AU and NATO. However, in the new European strategy, there is a clear quest to balance hard and soft power. In the foreword to the EUGS the High Representative stressed: “for Europe, soft and hard power go hand in hand” (EUGS 2016: 4) and within the document itself, it is underlined: “in this fragile world, soft power is not enough: we must enhance our credibility in security and defence” (EUGS 2016: 44). In order to make a rapid, effective, responsive CSDP, the willingness is to “(...) build closer connections between civilian and military structures and missions, bearing in mind that these may be deployed in the same theatre” (EUGS 2016: 47-48). Furthermore, “we must develop the capacity for rapid response also by tackling the procedural, financial and political obstacles which prevent the deployment of the Battlegroups, hamper force generation and reduce the effectiveness of CSDP military operations. At the same time, we must further develop our civilian missions-a trademark of CSDP-by encouraging force generation, speeding up deployment, and providing adequate training based on EU-wide curricula” (EUGS 2016: 47).

“CSDP civilian missions: which contribution?”

The birth of an European defence dimension dates back to the Cologne European Council in 1999, when the ESDP was established with the commitment of the so called “Petersberg tasks”\(^1\). Along with military structures and assets, the EU adopted civilian capabilities at the Santa Maria de Feira Council in 2000. Four priority areas were identified for the EU civilian contribution: police, rule of law, civil administration and civil protection. The following Civilian Headline Goal (CHG) 2008 added two priorities, monitoring missions and support for EU special representatives. It also emphasised the need for the Union to conduct simultaneous missions in other two areas, namely,

\(^1\) With this term, the reference is to the type of actions that the EU can undertake. Particularly, they have humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking. The Lisbon Treaty added joint disarmament operations, military advice and assistance tasks, and post-conflict stabilisation tasks.
security sector reform (SSR) and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR). Moreover, the following CHG 2010 placed new emphasis on the civil-military cooperation and on the need to improve readiness in force deployment, introducing the creation of Civilian response teams (CRTs). In the framework of the CSDP, civilian missions have become a distinctive feature of the EU external action. The typology of launched civilian missions could be classified on the basis of the type of mission and of the nature of the tasks. Concerning the type of mission, it can be distinguished:

- Police missions. The aim is to provide advice and to train local police forces. Examples of police missions are: EUPM in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Eupol Proxima in Fyrom, Eupol Copps in Palestinian Territories, Eupol DR Congo etc.
- Rule of law missions. The objective is to provide assistance in the reform of the justice and penitentiary system according to international standard. For instance, Eujust Themis in Georgia, Eujust lex in Iraq.
- Border assistance and monitoring missions; the mandate is to supervise and provide assistance in the border and customs systems, i.e., Eubam Rafah, Eubam Moldova-Ukraine, Eubam Libya.
- Security sector reform missions. These are specific type of missions, which also can have a military expertise contribution, even if they are formally civilian. They have the purpose to offer advice and assistance to local security actor and authorities (army, maritime forces etc.) in reform issues in the security sector, in a manner consistent with democratic norms and principles of good governance, human rights, transparency and rule of law. Examples of this kind of missions are Eussr Guinea Bissau, and more recently Eucap Nestor and Eucap Sahel Niger.

Otherwise, concerning the nature of tasks, missions can be divided in three categories:

- Strengthening missions: they mainly refer to capacity-building through the triptych monitoring, mentoring and advising (MMA). Precisely, monitoring concerns the observation of performance, of working methods of the local counterpart, and mentoring and advising are related to the support, the knowledge transfer and change at institutional level. The point of reference are best practices and internationally accepted principles, according to which address new reforms. In general, strengthening missions are those with police and rule of law tasks;
- Monitoring missions: “they provide third-party observation of an activity or a process, be it the performance of a given sector (police, justice, border, etc., such as Eubam Rafah or Euumm Georgia) or the implementation of an agreement (ceasefire line, peace agreement, etc., for example Amm mission in Aceh-Indonesia) (Tardy 2015: 24);
- Executive missions. The term “executive” refers to the possibility to perform certain functions in substitution to the local authorities. In this case, the European staff does not have only an “observation and advising” objectives but it can also replace in some functions the local one. There is only one example of executive mission: Eulex in Kosovo, which has executive responsibilities in the areas of war crimes, organised crime and high-level corruption, as well as property and privatisation cases.

Nevertheless, the landmark of the European approach to state building remains the concept of “local ownership”. Local authorities and staff are primarily involved in the process of reforms,

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2 A Civilian response team is a pool of experts prepared for rapid deployment.
in order to be active and responsible of institutional changes. This is evidence of the so called “bottom-up approach”.

An overall assessment of civilian missions’ contribution to international peace and security should consider positive developments and aspects to improve. CSDP operations have become an added value of peacebuilding, able to contribute meaningfully to multilateral efforts towards global crisis management (Tardy 2015: 41). Firstly, CSDP missions allowed to extend EU expertise in many fields of crisis management, namely security sector reform, rule of law, border management etc., which are central to face effectively current crises. Furthermore, especially after innovations in procedures and institutions appeared with the Lisbon Treaty, the EU acquired a multidimensional set of instruments (political, economic, security), in order to promote a more comprehensive approach: “there is a theoretical match between the multidimensionality of crises and the multidimensionality of EU instruments that de facto makes the EU a prominent actor of crisis management” (Tardy 2015: 141).

Undoubtedly, as Pirozzi (2015: 149) highlighted: “the operational developments in the post-Lisbon phase have expanded CSDP action in several respects: the EU has intervened in new theatres, such as the Sahel region and South Sudan; embarked on new tasks, including assistance to local authorities for maritime surveillance and civil aviation; and tested new planning instruments such as regional strategies and comprehensive concepts”. Additionally, the EU has become a “support actor” for other international organisations, i.e. African Union, United Nations and Nato, by attending operations in substitution of, in coordination with, to prepare the intervention of other global players.

However, to enhance effectiveness on the ground and to strengthen credibility as security provider, the EU should consider and address many shortfalls which characterise its commitment. First of all, one priority should be to focus more on crisis prevention: this would allow to avoid the destruction of lives, goods, infrastructures etc., and at the same time, to reduce the radicalisation of violence and to protect EU interests and security. Moreover, CSDP capacities, as well as competencies and decision-making procedures, both at EU institutions and Member states levels, should be improved. On the one hand, this means to find new adequate ways for personnel recruitment and to standardise training policies at European level. In this way, the EU could have available a defined force generation and could guarantee a quicker and more effective deployment. On the other hand, CSDP structures should promote new mechanisms for a rapid launch of its missions, as well as for sustainable planning and exit strategies, and they should identify the most appropriate tools for the
need of the host country and define clear and realistic mandates. Looking still at the presence in the theatre, the EU needs to consolidate the coordination among other EU (EU Special Representative, delegation of the European Commission) and non-EU (Nato, UN, AU) actors on the ground. In the same country, there could be the presence of many players of EU and non-EU family, consequently to strengthen the cooperation would allow not only a more incisive action but it would avoid the risk of duplication and dispersion of resources.

The even more complex challenges, that the EU is called to face, require also three more connected links. The first is a stronger nexus between civilian and military components: an integration in the crisis management procedures, in the conduct of missions and in the chain of command. The new EUGS stresses this point with great emphasis. The second is the link development-security, that is, the ability to think a comprehensive action in capacity-building and institutional reforms, able to contribute to a broader development in the host country, and as a result, capable to assure a higher degree of security for the Union itself. This is related to a longer-term vision and support action to ensure stability in a crisis area, securing a handover from CSDP engagement to other EU actors and instruments. The last link is between internal-external security: particularly current hybrid threats show a closer relation between internal-external challenges and internal-external activities. Security problems such as terrorism, illegal migration, organised crime and so on, “have made the traditional divide between internal and external security increasingly irrelevant and led to calls for greater interaction between different levels of EU action” (Tardy 2016: 1). This nexus allows also to mark a new trend: the traditional EU bodies involved in the civilian crisis management, CSDP civilian structures and the European Commission, have been flanked by Justice and Home Affair (JHA) agencies, for example Frontex and Europol, providing additional expertise in the field of border management, counter terrorism etc., and essentially creating a “three pillar” structure for CM. “The involvement of JHA agencies is a response to a need for expertise and action on issues that directly impact on EU’s internal security” (Tardy 2016: 2), and it is the symptom of the need, to develop a joined up approach, as stressed in the EUGS. Finally, another shortcoming concerns the praxis of evaluation in CSDP missions. This is a fragile aspect because a culture of evaluation has long been resisted in the frame of CSDP, especially for political reasons. Instead, developing a practise based on a result-oriented approach to assess output and outcomes is fundamental to improve effectiveness and efficiency of missions, and to enhance the credibility of the EU action and its ability to respond efficaciously and timely to crises.

Briefly, the evaluation framework of civilian missions is developed on two different levels: mission and institutions. At missions’ level, Heads of missions are asked to report regularly on mission progress by means of the following documents (Loeser 2015):

1. the Mission Implementation Plan (MIP), which records the activities undertaken within each of the assigned tasks. It is a tool at the Head of Mission’s disposal to plan and oversee mission activities that are determined with a view to achieving agreed mission objectives;
2. Monthly mission reports which focus on factual information on mission progress made and on mission outputs;
3. Six monthly reports, which are more systematic and contain an in depth analysis of missions achievements.

At the CSDP institutions’ level, other instruments exist and many bodies are involved. The Crisis Management and Planning directorate (CMPD) drafts Strategic Reviews with the aim to check the mandate, objectives, size and sustainability of existing missions and operations against the background of a changing strategic context or a new local or international political situation. CMPD
also identifies lessons to be learned from political-strategic planning of CSDP missions and from the related strategic reviews (Cremonini 2015). Lessons learned are also identified in other CSDP structures, such as the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capabilities (CPCC) and the European Union Military Staff (EUMS), then the CSDP Lessons Management Group determines five broad and key lessons to submit to Political and Security Committee (PSC) for the elaboration of an Annual CSDP Lessons Report.

Nevertheless, an evaluation system should also consider long term effectiveness, or precisely the degree of achievement of declared goals in the mandate, and also the sustainability of the results produced in the field, understood as durability of reforms and level of capacity achieved by local authorities. Most importantly, the evaluation should take into account the recipients’ point of view, especially local authorities that directly participated to reforms processes.

Conclusion

Summing up, the itinerary has shown the EU wide and meaningful contribution to crisis management through the deployment of military and civilian operations in the context of the Common security and defence policy, “the diversity of civilian CSDP missions conducted since 2003 has brought added value to the EU, underpinning the EU’s foreign policy with concrete interventions and contributing to make it a credible actor in the eld of crisis management and conflict prevention” (Garcia-Perez, Glume 2015: 168). The new strategy highlights the importance of these tools, even if CSDP operations should be always connected to a broader foreign policy framework, where they are one element that the EU can use. This means to place CSDP in a comprehensive and multi-dimensional strategy, based on the need of a shared analysis of threats and a common, joined up action to tackle them. Recent dangers and global events are at the same time obstacles and opportunities, the EU is called to have a proactive attitude, capable of thinking strategically about its interests and priorities and able to shape its international role consequently. In this challenging times for the EU and the European project, the wish is that the new strategy will promote both “internal consolidation through strengthened institutions and operational capacities that are able to build a common culture and a unitary sense of purpose and external projection by investing on the added value of the Union’s model and the cooperation with traditional and emerging stakeholders” (Pirozzi 2015: 157).

Essential bibliography

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