

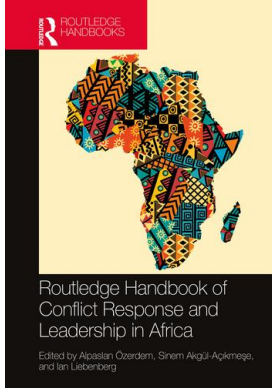
This article was downloaded by: 10.3.97.143

On: 10 Dec 2023

Access details: *subscription number*

Publisher: *Routledge*

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: 5 Howick Place, London SW1P 1WG, UK



## **Routledge Handbook of Conflict Response and Leadership in Africa**

Alpaslan Özerdem, Sinem Akgül-Açkmece, Ian Liebenberg

### **Conflict Response through Operations**

Publication details

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780429318603-9>

Çidem Üstün, Sinem Akgül-Açkmece

**Published online on: 15 Sep 2021**

**How to cite :-** Çidem Üstün, Sinem Akgül-Açkmece. 15 Sep 2021, *Conflict Response through Operations from:* Routledge Handbook of Conflict Response and Leadership in Africa Routledge  
Accessed on: 10 Dec 2023

<https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780429318603-9>

**PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR DOCUMENT**

Full terms and conditions of use: <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/legal-notices/terms>

This Document PDF may be used for research, teaching and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproductions, re-distribution, re-selling, loan or sub-licensing, systematic supply or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The publisher shall not be liable for an loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

# 6

## CONFLICT RESPONSE THROUGH OPERATIONS

### Understanding the leadership roles of the EU and NATO in Africa

*Çiğdem Üstün and Sinem Akgül-Açıkmeşe*

#### Introduction

The European Union (EU) and NATO have been active in the African continent increasingly in the 2000s. NATO has supported the African Union (AU) in its peacekeeping missions specifically in Somalia and Sudan through lending its military assets and training capacity, has conducted Operation Allied Provider, Operation Allied Protector, and Operation Ocean Shield in order to fight against piracy off the coasts of the Horn of Africa, and has responded to the uprisings and the resulting conflict in Libya through Operation Unified Protector. Meanwhile, apart from its political and economic foreign policy tools at its disposal in its relations with the African countries, the EU has been involved in dealing with the security challenges and the conflicts of the continent with recourse to its military and civilian capabilities via EU-led operations in Congo, Sudan, Somalia and off the coasts of Somalia, Mali, Niger, Central African Republic, and Libya. For both institutions, Africa has been crucial not only because of their declared superior aims to bring peace and security but also due to the historical ties between the regional countries and member states of the EU and NATO, their economic and trade links with the African countries, and their desire to demonstrate their 'leadership' in global politics.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the hegemonic ideologies, rising conservatism, bipolarity, having bold plans, and being pragmatic were the coins of the realm if one was going to assume the role of leadership (Schechter, 1987, p. 198). The end of the Cold War, increasing interdependencies among the states, mobility, changing threat perceptions, and the responses to these perceived threats, naturally, altered the expectations from a leader at the global level. Leadership is no longer limited to states or states' policymakers. Leaders should have the capacity to transform the objectives into realities, and leadership needs a relationship "between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow" (Kauzes and Posner, 2002, p. 20). International organizations, private sector representatives, heads of non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, and even individuals other than politicians may be the leaders of today's world as long as they can set direction and develop a vision, influence the creation of coalitions and partnerships, and achieve their vision through strategic plans (Kotterman, 2006, pp. 13–17).

In the light of the main literature on leadership as cited in the references, we identify four main components to look for when analyzing the leadership position of the EU and NATO in the region; by looking at whether they have a vision, have skills to achieve this vision, have followers, and finally have achieved their vision. In this context, this chapter argues that both the EU and NATO have specific visions set for themselves highlighting security, cooperation, and peace in the continent. For instance, the Africa–EU Partnership guided by the Joint Africa–EU Strategy, which was defined as a political vision and road map for the future cooperation and NATO’s Strategic Concept of 2010, shows direction to the organization in its operations in the continent. In the light of their visions/strategic plans, both the EU and NATO utilize their skills to reach their aims. At times, they also try to cooperate and coordinate their missions for joint objectives. However, as the chapter will argue, their limited skills, be it diplomatic or military, are not fully adequate to achieve their vision. When we look at the EU and its capabilities, it is crystal clear that the EU is an actor which can be active either at the pre-conflict stage to work on the root-causes of the conflicts or post-conflict state working on reconstruction and peace-keeping mechanisms. On the other hand, although NATO’s military means become crucial in conflict resolution as part of its out-of-area missions, they are not enough to resolve the crisis and conflict situation alone; since NATO solely focuses on the hard security aspects of conflicts and neglects the humanitarian aspects in a general sense. Thus, although the EU and NATO both have ongoing operations in the continent, they mostly lack the necessary tools to claim leadership by themselves.

It is believed that the lack of necessary skills is not the only reason behind the failure of a fully fledged ‘leadership’ branding, but also the shortage of followers plays an important role in understanding why both institutions cannot entirely assume leadership in Africa. Both actors need to generate followers both internally and regionally vis-à-vis the international and regional actors, which requires a certain level of legitimacy. The literature on legitimacy of the international institutions demonstrates that there is a close link between national and international legitimacy beliefs (Dellmuth and Tallberg, 2018, p. 315). The member states are reluctant to transfer their sovereign rights in their international affairs which bring the intergovernmental character of both the EU and NATO when it comes to decision making in foreign policy.

Even though the relations between the states became more complex, the number of non-governmental organizations at the global arena increased, the voices of the people are heard more on international issues, mobility at the global level is increased, and technological achievements have made it possible to increase communication among people living very far away from one another. Moreover, the impacts of digitalization on the economic activities of not only companies but also individuals could not bring around the states to give up their supreme right on foreign policy matters just yet. Thus neither the EU nor the UN can pursue policies independently from their members, which in turn becomes another issue of legitimacy in the eyes of the African states as well as of the peoples of the continent. Accordingly, EU member countries as well as NATO Allies cannot be differentiated from the EU and NATO, respectively, and due to the remains of the colonial past, those institutions cannot gain the support of African ‘followers’. All in all, this chapter argues that the leadership aspirations of both international organizations could not be achieved due to all these limitations which could be reflected in the specific ‘operations’ of the EU and NATO in the African continent.

The EU has several ongoing operations, civilian and military in nature, in the continent. Operation Atalanta–EUNAVFOR Somalia as the EU’s first naval operation was initiated in 2008, and it is a counter-piracy military operation at sea off the Horn of Africa and in the Western Indian Ocean. EUTM Somalia, in close coordination with African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), focuses on tactical training, strategic advisory, and mentoring. It aims to

build long-term capability in the Ministry of Defense and the Army in general. The EU contributes to other countries' defence and military capabilities through its training missions in Mali and the Central African Republic (CAR). While the mission in Mali aims to restore the military capacity, the one in CAR is to contribute to the country's defence sector reform and to give strategic advice to the Ministry of Defense and the president's cabinet. Since the EU's civilian facet is stronger than its military one, the extent of its civilian missions is much broader, such as the EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) in Libya, which is to develop border management to disrupt organized criminal networks, and the EU Capacity Building (EUCAP) missions in Somalia, Sahel Mal, and Sahel Niger. These missions aim to enhance maritime security in Somalia, help the Malian government to reaffirm their authority as a response to the Northern Mali Crisis and to establish a human rights approach in the fight against terrorism and organized crime in Niger. In addition to its ongoing missions, EU has completed operations in Guinea-Bissau, Chad, South Sudan, CAR, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). These missions had a wide range of activities from giving advice and assistance on reform of security sector to stabilization of the security conditions, from aviation security missions to improvement of the humanitarian situation, from helping national police forces to supporting the UN Missions such as MONUC.

NATO, on the other hand, had more limited operations and presence in Africa. It assisted the African Union (AU) in Somalia, Sudan, and Darfur while acting in the Gulf of Aden and off the Horn of Africa against piracy. Similar to the EU, NATO works with AMISOM and provides air-lift support to the AU member states willing to deploy their forces to Somalia under AMISOM and sends experts for the AU Strategic Planning and Management Unit (SPMU) in the area of air movement coordination and military manpower management. Moreover, NATO's Libya operation has been one of the most debated operations in the region. UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1973 on 17 March 2011 condemning the "gross and systematic violation of human rights, including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and summary executions" (United Nations, Security Council, 2011b). With the adoption of UNSCR 1973, several UN member states took immediate military action to protect civilians under Operation Odyssey Dawn. This operation, which was not under the command and control of NATO, was conducted by a multinational coalition led by the United States (US). The Alliance took sole command and control of the international military effort for Libya on 31 March 2011. Operation Unified Protector was a response to the UN's call to international community in 2011. This was not the first time that NATO played an active military role in Libya. At the beginning of the 1990s, NATO provided increased AWACS coverage of the Central Mediterranean to monitor air approach routes from Libya after the UN Security Council imposed sanctions designed to induce Libya to surrender suspects in the bombing of a Pan Am airliner over the town of Lockerbie in Scotland (SHAPE NATO, n.d.). Operation Allied Provider, Operation Allied Protector, and Operation Ocean Shield were the other three large operations that NATO conducted in the continent. Operation Allied Provider, which started as a temporary operation in 2008 to escort World Food Program (WFP) vessels and, more generally, to patrol the waters around Somalia, was a significant operation since it was the first time a NATO-flagged force deployed to the Gulf. Operation Allied Protector and Operation Ocean Shield were designed as counter-piracy operations. Operation Allied Protector was to improve the safety of commercial maritime routes and international navigation off the Horn of Africa between March and August 2009 while NATO naval forces operate off the Horn of Africa, including the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean up to the Strait of Hormuz as part of Operation Ocean Shield.

In the context of this wide array of operations of both institutions in Africa, this chapter will focus on responding (1) to what extent both institutions' operational capacities in Africa are

effective in conflict management, (2) how do we define the leadership of the EU and NATO in Africa, and what are the main limitations to leadership capabilities, (3) what are their potential in being considered as good leaders in the continent, and (4) what are the ways in which NATO and the EU can collaborate in Africa in order to match the objectives of the official calls for inter-institutional cooperation?

### **The EU's leadership capacity in Africa: a benevolent actor or just a foreigner?**

The EU has been taking steps in order to become a global political actor increasingly after the Cold War. The failure of the Union to act in the Balkan theatre at the end of the 1990s was a wake-up call, bringing French and British authorities together in St. Malo to advance the creation of a European security and defence policy, including a European military force capable of autonomous action. Following the Franco-British proposal, European efforts to push for a stronger security and defence policy were accompanied with the EU's determination to increase its role in global affairs through development assistance, economic and financial aid, as well as support for democratization and the rule of law all around the world including Africa. In accordance with this resolve, *A Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy* was drafted in June 2016 in order to offer a broad strategic framework in which the EU would be able respond to international challenges through a number of tools and mechanisms. The strategy identified three sets of priorities which are also applicable for the EU's policies towards the African continent: responding to conflicts and crises, building capacity for partners, and protecting the Union and its citizens, as well as doing all these in cooperation with other international actors including NATO. Building on the macro aims of the EU's Global Strategy, the development policy for Africa aims to strengthen resilience, peace, security, governance, migration, mobility, and mobilization of investments for African structural and sustainable transformation as stated in 5th AU-EU Summit held in 2017 (European Commission, n.d.-a). In 2018, the Africa–Europe Alliance was established to boost strategic investment and job creation, as well as investment in education and skills, and to strengthen the business environment and investment climate and tap the full potential of economic integration and trade (European Commission, n.d.-b). In line with these aims, Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) under the Pan–African Programme provided €845 million for the period 2014–2020 while 50% of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Africa comes from the EU's 28 countries – 20% managed by the European Commission (African Union, n.d.). As part of the coronavirus response funding, the EU announced that €3.8 billion was allocated to Africa for strengthening health preparedness and response, as well as research into coronavirus (African Union, n.d.).

The first Africa–EU Summit in 2000 demonstrated the leaders' commitment to inject a strategic dimension into the partnership between Africa and Europe. Following this Cairo declaration, in 2007 at the 2nd EU–Africa Summit, peace and security; democratic governance and human rights; regional economic integration, trade, and infrastructure; millennium development goals; climate change; energy; migration mobility and employment; and science, information society, and space were set as eight priority areas. In 2011, they maintained these priority areas, and side events such as EU–Africa Business Forum, Africa–EU Youth Event, Conference on Higher Education, and civil society and trade unions' meetings took place. In the same year, Council Conclusions on the Horn of Africa stated that the EU will assist the countries to build accountable political structures and will work closely with the regional countries and international organizations to resolve current conflicts, to bring an end to piracy, terrorism or irregular migration, and to support economic growth and political and economic regional cooperation

(Council of the European Union, 2011). In 2012, the European Parliament's (Simon et al., 2012) emphasis on the region confirmed these concerns while highlighting the importance of energy flows from the continent to Europe.

In 2014, priority areas of EU–Africa cooperation were lessened to the five key areas of peace and security; democracy, good governance, and human rights; human development, sustainable and inclusive development and growth; continental integration; and global and emerging issues (African Union, 2014). In 2017, the number of priority areas were decreased, and investing in people (education, science, technology, and skills development); strengthening resilience, peace, security, and governance; migration and mobility; mobilizing investments for African structural and sustainable transformation were listed as updated priorities in the joint declaration (European Council, 2017). The final Summit planned for 2020 for a new EU–Africa ‘partnership’ blueprint has been delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; however, five partnership themes were proposed in the Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council in March 2020: green transition and energy access, digital transformation, sustainable growth and jobs, peace and governance, and migration and mobility (European Commission, 2020). Discursive tracking of these themes reflects the changes in the EU’s priorities in its global affairs and partnerships in the region due to its shifting needs and policies inside the EU borders such as the green deal, digitalization not only in economy but in almost every aspect of life, sustainability and protection of the environment as well as ensuring economic growth and regulating migration. The official discourses of the EU also suggest that direct involvement into the conflictual affairs of the continent has never been set as a priority for the EU; instead, the Union has focused, at least on paper, on the root causes of conflicts in order to prevent them and/or to encourage post-conflict transformations including capacity-building and training.

EU’s regional policies are shaped and reshaped throughout the years via its bilateral relations with the regional countries as well as through the operative capabilities of the EU under the umbrella of its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). In line with the priorities and concerns in the 2000s, the EU had given special importance to the situation in Mali since the state authority has been eroded, which increased the perception of the threat generating from the country due to the existing drug trading routes running through Mali to Europe, the presence of jihadist groups, and potential refugee flows (Karlsrud and Smith, 2015). Mali’s significance in EU policies also can be seen in the development aid allocated there. In the 2014–2020 budget period, €665 million in funding was allocated in the focal sectors such as peace consolidation and state reform, food security and rural development, and education and infrastructure (European Commission, n.d.–c). In addition to these programmes, the EU has been conducting CSDP civilian and military missions since 2012 to strengthen both the internal security capabilities as well as the military capacity with the EU Training Mission (EUTM) Mali and EUCAP Sahel Mali. EUTM supports not only the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission (MINUSMA) in Mali, which was established by UNSCR 2100 in 2013, but also the French-led Operation Barkhane (Aris and König, 2018).

Despite the historical nexus and the prejudices towards the colonialist tendencies of European countries in the past, the EU has been perceived as a benign power in Mali to some extent through a combination of its operations, humanitarian aid activities, and policy support, which have been centred upon diplomacy and developmental aims. However, the same cannot be argued for the individually French-led operation. The historical nexus impacts the perception towards these interventions in a negative way, even though the French troops have been the only military force on the ground able to oppose rebel groups (Djire et al., 2017). Due to the colonial history between the regional countries and certain EU member states, member states’ attitudes have also been criticized since they reveal the fact that the EU’s Africa policy is determined

not only by normative elements but also by self-interests and rational calculations (Stahl, 2011). Thus the EU's military presence is not very much welcomed, when the development aspect including humanitarian assistance is left out of the picture and when the EU acts like a collection of self-interest-driven member states. Accordingly, as the leadership literature suggests, a self-interest-based strategy has a negative impact on the leadership branding of the EU as an intergovernmental institution in Africa, since leaders who mainly seek their own good would be classified as "bad" (Winston and Patterson, 2006, p. 12).

In a similar vein, the EU's missions in Chad (EUFOR Tsad/RCA) and CAR (EUFOR RCA) have also been criticized mostly as a result of the self-interest-driven policies mostly reflected in France's involvement in Chad's conflict, which reinforced the perception that the European Union Force (EUFOR) Tchad/RCA amounts to a French operation camouflaged in EU colours (Grunstein, 2008). EUFOR Tchad/CAR was the largest mission of the EU in Africa, based on the number of troops and the participating member countries. UNSCR 1778 in 2007 authorized this mission under Chapter VII "to take all necessary measures" to (1) contribute to protecting civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons, (2) facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, and (3) contribute to protecting UN personnel (UN Security Council, 2007). Despite the self-grandeur aims of the operation as well as its size, the EU forces had a marginal effect because local actors manipulated the mission as, for example, deployment of EUFOR within the camps and at the border were not allowed by the local authorities, and the mission did not have 'sustainable' clear political objectives. Moreover, the replacement of EUFOR by MINURCAT was not planned well, which added another negative score on the EU's record (Dembinski and Schott, 2013).

Nevertheless, in contrast to these operations, the EU had a relatively positive image in Operation ARTEMIS conducted in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2003 due to its collaboration with the UN and because it showed that Western military interventions do not need to be about regime change. The operation's only and superior aim was to improve the humanitarian situation in Bunia, rather than getting involved in the daily political processes of the country and the conflict in a direct way (Norheim-Martinsen, 2011). Likewise, Operation Atalanta included humanitarian concerns, including countering piracy, and the EU was perceived as a relatively benevolent actor to a certain extent; however, the operation's success remained limited since the threat continued and could only be alleviated totally by means of Somalian state institutions touching upon the root causes of piracy other than EU's patrolling off the coast of Somalia. Thus supporting regional ownership becomes a main strand in the claims of effective and welcomed leadership. Sudan could be considered as a positive case of supporting regional ownership where the "EU had avoided direct involvement in the crisis by assuming a supporting role behind the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) under the guise of 'effective multilateralism' through 'working with partners' while at the same time respecting African ownership" (Norheim-Martinsen, 2011, p. 24). In relation to regional ownership, it has been argued that the EU has adopted a superficially attractive rhetoric of a partnership of equals between European and African states, which may be seen as a "reflection of a genuine desire to move away from neo-colonial intervention or alternatively as making a desire to avoid direct involvement" in the conflict (Gray, 2005, p. 218).

All in all, in the light of these perils and pitfalls of the EU policies as well as by looking into the objectives and the track record of completed and ongoing operations in Africa, we argue that the EU fully bears one out of four components of the leadership position in the region: presence of a vision. The strategies published as a result of the EU-Africa Summits since the beginning of the 2000s, highlight the priorities of the EU which clearly aims at reaching and eliminating the root causes of security threats as well as how to restructure the countries in conflict as the clashes are over.

Two out of the other three components – having skills to achieve this vision and having followers who provide legitimacy to use those skills in a coherent policy – are not completely present. Even though the EU has civilian and military instruments at its disposal when performing its operative functions in Africa, those skills cannot be effectively used due to some limitations. EU's ability to work with the other organizations such as regional organizations as well as the NATO and the UN are considered as essential skills in achieving the vision. It is believed that, especially in the fight against terrorism, regional and international cooperation efforts can increase the regional approach rather than cooperation between only the EU and regional organizations. For example, in Darfur, cooperation among the AU, EU, and NATO proved to work in the coordination of airlift capabilities, and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AUPSC) has expressed its interest to develop cooperation with the NATO on future peacekeeping operations (Rein, 2015).

Moreover, the lack of legitimacy of the Union in its foreign affairs in general and in the region in particular is the biggest obstacle in using the EU's civilian and military skills of dealing with the African continent. First of all, the EU's lack of broad-based member state support in its operations explains the limited scope and targeted approach of the missions (Brosig, 2014). As observed earlier, having followers is a must for leadership status, which also provides legitimacy in the case of international relations. EU's inability to secure support at the domestic level from its member states reveal that the Union is lacking an important element of leadership. Furthermore, as long as the EU's policies do not include regional ownership support and developmental concerns, it is highly unlikely that the EU receives African followers. Finally, the national agendas and interest-driven policies of the regional countries as well as the member states prevent the EU from acting as a benign actor, which demonstrates the deficiencies in securing followers at the European and African levels.

All of the factors described here decrease the impact of the EU operations, preventing the EU from achieving its aim: creating a peaceful and secure continent with which trade and economic relations would continue without any interruption and increasing the wealth and prosperity in the region, which would terminate the root causes of conflicts. Thus the EU could be labelled as a foreigner with unattainable leadership goals in the continent.

### **NATO in Africa: a military leader or yet another actor in the region?**

In comparison to the EU, NATO's involvement in the continent is more limited. Libya, Darfur, and the prevention of piracy have been the main priorities of the Alliance. The main reason behind this limited presence in Africa has been the reluctance of Britain and the US in NATO (Sayle, 2016) as well as the ambiguity and debates over out-of-area operations.

Since the end of the Cold War, in order to address the issues of relevance and alleviate the criticisms, such as a very recent one in 2019 voiced by Emmanuel Macron as NATO being a "brain-dead" organization, NATO assumed new roles and responsibilities which are drafted in the various revised Strategic Concept documents and reflected in the out-of-area missions (Asmus et al., 1993). As NATO undertook military operations, relief assistance missions, training missions for security forces, and logistical support to regional organizations in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Iraq, and Darfur, it became apparent that the Alliance was under transformation from a regional organization to an international and even a global one (Daalder and Goldgeier, 2006). It also benefited from contributions from non-member states, which clearly manifested its ability to adapt to the new necessities of the 21st century. As these necessities forced organizations and states to develop skills to fight against unforeseen threats, drawing clear lines on NATO operations and defining the areas in which NATO could and would operate became difficult.



Accordingly and as part of its Strategic Concepts, NATO became involved in the fight against terrorism actions, countering piracy missions and post-conflict reconstruction activities such as training of forces.

In this general context, NATO became involved in the operations in Darfur after the AU asked for assistance in 2005. NATO agreed to give support to AMIS on humanitarian grounds; however, it did not specify which article of the NATO Treaty was being invoked (Segell, 2011). The case of Darfur has been important for NATO, since it was the first time that NATO operated in response to a regional alliance plea for assistance where there were no common member states and in full cooperation with regional and global organizations. However, it should be mentioned that the division of labour and cooperation has not been easily achieved on the ground since some member states preferred NATO and some others (i.e. France) preferred the EU to be the major actor in the Darfur theatre.

NATO's involvement has not been perceived as negative since there was a genuine cooperation effort both at the regional and international levels. Plus, both the EU and NATO have been invited by a regional organization which did not aim at changing the regime in Sudan. The comparatively positive image of NATO was also supported by the fact that it would only implement its policy once the government of Sudan had given the green light to the AU, although the founding act of the AU established "the right of the union to intervene in a member state pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect to grave circumstances namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity" (African Union, 2002). Thus the issue of regional ownership manifests itself in this operation, since NATO acts in cooperation with a regional organization with a kind of domestic authorization. Accordingly, in 2007, NATO Allies agreed to provide strategic airlift to support the AMISOM, and in 2009, they agreed to provide strategic sealift (NATO, 2019), marking significant steps for NATO–AU cooperation.

In contradiction to these missions which branded NATO as a benevolent actor in Africa, NATO's Operation Unified Protector in Libya, which began in March 2012 following UNSC Resolutions 1970 and 1973, was heavily criticized. Resolution 1970 refers to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and includes arms embargo, travel bans on designated persons, and a freeze on assets, as well as new sanctions (United Nations, Security Council, 2011a). Resolution 1973, adopted in March 2011, one month after Resolution 1970, demands the immediate establishment of a ceasefire; a complete end to violence and all attacks against and abuses of civilians; a ban on all flights in the airspace of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya; strict implementation of the arms embargo; and a freeze imposed on the financial assets and economic resources of designated persons (UN Security Council, 2011b). Resolution 1973 created controversies, and in the end, Germany, Brazil, India, Russia, and China abstained. Although the operation was justified on the basis of the urgent need to stop thousands of civilian protesters' death in Benghazi, the civil society organizations such as the Human Rights Watch reported that the number of deaths and the situation on the ground were exaggerated by the Western media and that all around Libya there were 233 deaths at the time (Igwe et al., 2017). Criticisms over the operation referred to the colonial past and imperialist ambitions of the European countries and NATO's overstepping the mandate of protecting civilians and civilian populated areas with the overall objective of changing the regime. All these allegations raised concerns over the legitimacy of the operation while it disregarded local cultural terrain and regional relations among the states as well as the regional and international organizations.

Besides, it has been clearly seen that the toppling of Qaddafi did not calm down the conflict while Islamic radicalism, organized crime, human trafficking, and threats were heightened. The conflicts between old tribal clans increased, which impacted the undergoing infrastructural works, and almost a million workers were displaced. Plus, NATO was accused of violating the

arms embargo by actively supplying weapons to the rebels through some of its members (Wang et al., 2011).

When we look at the four components that this chapter set forth to acquire a leadership position, it is argued that NATO has the first component to a certain extent: presence of a vision. The 2014 Wales Summit of NATO re-established the need to focus on the organization's tasks of collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security (3Cs) and specifically highlighted the importance of North Africa in preventing instability, arms, drugs, and human trafficking in Sahel. In the efforts to update the Strategic Concept, it is argued that the core tasks of NATO are not adequate anymore and that there is a need for a more global capacity to face new challenges such as hybrid threats, attacks on democratic institutions, and the growing global division between democratic and autocratic regimes (Binnendijk and Koster, 2020). In addition, NATO's Southern Flank is considered to be one of the most volatile regions. In the 2018 Brussels Summit, it was declared that a Package on the South was endorsed with three main objectives: to strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence against threats emanating from the south, to contribute to international crisis management efforts in the region, and to help NATO's regional partners build resilience against security threats, including those in the fight against terrorism (NATO, 2018).

The NATO Strategic Direction–South Hub (NSD-S Hub) was established in 2017 as a meeting room for NATO allies and partners with subject matter experts (SME) from local and regional institutions, including universities, research centres, and non-governmental organizations from North Africa, the Middle East, Sahel, and Sub-Saharan Africa in order to bring long-term stability through better understanding (NSD-S Hub Mission, n.d.). In 2018, it was called on to be active and reached its full capability in the summer of that year. The NATO–Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Regional Centre in Kuwait was also inaugurated in 2017, and its activities are open to all member countries of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the Gulf Cooperation Council, which demonstrates the global characteristic of the organization in line with its vision. Similarly, there is an eagerness to increase dialogue and cooperation among the League of Arab States, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the AU. All in all, although the strategic concept needs to be updated in line with the changing threats to and expectations from the organization, it is fair to conclude that NATO has set a vision for itself globally and in the case of Africa when NATO deems it necessary to act as part of its collective defence, crisis management, and cooperative security goals.

As in the case of the EU, two other components – the relevant skills and the followers who provide legitimacy – are the relative shortcomings of NATO in assuming a leadership position. It is apparent that NATO has the necessary skills to achieve the leadership position in the region as the military skills of the organization are far greater than any other organization active in the region. In addition to the obvious military skills, the Mediterranean Dialogue has been providing political and diplomatic skills to the organization since the mid-1990s. The key principles of the Dialogue, such as non-discrimination, self-differentiation, inclusiveness, two-way engagement, non-imposition, complementary and mutual reinforcement, and diversity (NATO, 2015), are ways to create legitimacy and followers in the region. However, it is not very clear to what extent NATO will allocate its military capacity to the African conflicts when needed. Moreover, the historical colonial links between the European countries and the regional countries are the stumbling blocks to NATO's leadership position since they limit the positive reception of NATO within the region, culminating in the presence of domestic followers in most cases. Finally, when we consider the last component, achieving the vision, like the EU, NATO is far from fulfilling its aims, i.e. preventing instability and creating a non-conflictual space in the South.

## EU–NATO operational cooperation in Africa: friends or foes?

After the end of the Cold War, both the EU and NATO have undergone fundamental changes in their mandates and structure, widening their aims and operational reach. It has been observed that the EU is more involved in working with external political, economic, and civil society actors since its operations focus more on establishing and keeping the mechanisms for rule of law, security sector reform, training the police forces, as well as judicial support (Gebhard and Smith, 2015). However, faced with severe human rights violations or pleas for support from local actors, hard security measures by NATO, together with the EU's financial and diplomatic/political instruments, are needed. In this framework, opportunities and challenges resulting from the collaboration between NATO and the EU and the possible impact of deeper institutional involvement in conflict resolution efforts particularly in Africa are controversial topics. Græger argues that EU's comprehensive foreign policy toolbox and NATO as an efficient military entity would make a strong European team (2016). However, in practice, in the African context as well as in the other conflict regions where the EU and NATO are both present, the duplication of capabilities is still an ongoing problem in spite of the efforts to prevent the 3Ds – delinking the European defence component from NATO, duplicating existing efforts, and discriminating against non-EU NATO members such as Turkey.

The EU–NATO Declaration in December 2002 initiated EU–NATO Cooperation by setting out the conditions under which the EU may draw on NATO planning capabilities and assets for the exchange of classified information and consultation in the case of EU-led crisis management operations where NATO as a whole is not engaged (NATO, 2004). However, after the Republic of Cyprus joined the EU in 2004, EU–NATO cooperation in the security and defence field became more complicated. The Republic of Cyprus blocked Turkey's possible participation in CSDP's decision-making mechanisms as well as taking part in the European Defence Agency (EDA), while Turkey vetoed any sharing of classified information with Cyprus and its participation to EU–NATO meetings. This knotty relationship affects the sharing of intelligence, communication, command, and control in operations in general, including cooperation in Africa. The EU and NATO tried to overcome this obstacle by informal methods i.e. working dinners, staff to staff cooperation and etc. Therefore, we can argue that there is a strong will in both the EU and NATO to further institutional mechanisms in cooperation and coordination even if it is through the backdoor (Gebhard and Smith, 2015).

Within the context of partnership and since the beginning of the 2000s, the Atlantic Alliance and the EU have been supporting AU's capacity building in peacekeeping while the EU and the member states supported the AU via comprehensive measures including financial, personnel and political support as well as assistance with planning, equipment and technical support (Marsili, 2019). Africa Peace Facility (APF), which has its legal basis on the Cotonou Agreement, is supported by the European Development Fund and AU peace and security initiatives are dependent on European funding. However, APF is in no position to fund military equipment, training and arms which are mostly provided by NATO (Marsili, 2019). Darfur and the Horn have been the zones of overlapping EU and NATO missions. Indeed, Darfur has been a good example regarding cooperation among the AU, UN, NATO, and the EU while demonstrating that "NATO and the EU should adopt pragmatic rather than theological approaches to their cooperation methods" (Michel, 2007). It was argued that NATO and the EU suffered from ineffectiveness and duplication in Darfur since they ran parallel airlift missions. In the Horn of Africa, the EU, NATO, and the US' Building Partner Capacity activities have been largely complementary, even though this complementarity was often incidental (Pepper, 2015). In Libya, Mediterranean and Sahel, their cooperation efforts were largely ineffective. In the Mediterranean, for instance, the

EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia and the NATO led Sea Guardian—replacing the Active Endeavor Operation – intended to work closely, however without an optimal degree of cooperation, the activities of NATO and the EU in projecting were not effective (Stabile et al., 2018).

Lately, it seems that the priorities of both NATO and the EU states are drawn to each other due to increased migration from the continent to European countries as well as the economic difficulties faced in both NATO and EU member states. The need for energy resources and smooth flow of energy from the region to European countries is another source of motivation to approximate priorities and interests. Besides, the essentials of this century push both the EU and NATO to share some common objectives i.e. “the enhancement of neighbors’ and partners’ stability, by supporting their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence as well as their reform efforts” as defined in the Joint Declaration issued at the Warsaw Summit in 2016 (NATO, 2016). Thus, there is a broad room for cooperation between NATO and the EU, not only in the African context, but in the whole globe.

On the other hand, the EU has been accused of inability to establish a fully functioning defence with a clear content of strategic autonomy since the first steps of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) have been taken. The EU’s further steps towards establishing the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) can be an added value to NATO as it will ensure more research and development in the field and more contribution to collective security. It is believed that this may have a direct impact on an effective functional and geographical division of labour between the EU and NATO.

Having said this, it is obvious that the EU and NATO have a long way to go in order to fully and globally cooperate in their operations. First and foremost, the Cyprus issue and its effect on the Berlin Plus framework prevents them from collaborating on the ground and at the table. Secondly, although the 3Ds were debated for a long time, the essence of the division of labour between the EU and NATO is not decided yet. The recent literature (Stabile et al., 2018) demonstrates that, instead of the mere coordination of initiatives, the organizations should opt for division of labour. Thirdly, the legitimacy of EU and NATO operations on the ground is still not an accepted matter for all parties involved, and it has an impact on the collaboration tendencies of both institutions. According to international law, “the host country must consent to any operation on its territory, and this consent stipulation can only be violated via authorization from the United Nations Security Council” (Wolff, 2018). However, as experienced regularly, host country may not consent while the international organizations find it absolutely necessary to intervene due to severe human rights violations, while the UNSCRs may not provide the necessary legitimacy in the eyes of parties involved, i.e. regional or local actors. Accordingly, the EU and/or NATO might not be subject to the well receptive attitudes of the host countries in Africa.

## **Conclusion**

A consequential cooperation between the EU and NATO is desired not only in Africa but also at a global level. One of the questions asked at the beginning of the chapter was, “What are the ways in which NATO and the EU can collaborate in Africa in order to match the objectives of the official calls for inter-institutional cooperation?” The studies, as previously mentioned, demonstrated that the cooperation mechanism to be established should focus on division of labour rather than coordination, which also may provide a co-leadership status. The civilian capabilities of the EU are far more effective and welcomed than military capabilities. Therefore, it is believed that the possible division of labour should consider this strength of the Union. The steps taken under the PESCO are important, since they contribute to the military capabilities

of NATO, which already proved itself to provide military training, arms, and equipment to the regional organizations.

A definite division of labour may increase the EU's and NATO's potential to be considered as good leaders in the continent. It can be observed that, throughout the years, whenever the EU and NATO have clear jurisdictions in which they act in close cooperation with the regional organizations, they were more welcomed by the regional actors. Thus their potential to attract more followers among the actors in the region would increase as a result of the increased positive perception. It is essential that their policies are recognized as benign ones, rather than as a continuation of historical hierarchical relations of the colonial past.

This brings us to our question on how to define the leadership of the EU and NATO in Africa and the main limitations to leadership capabilities. The lack of followers, i.e. the lack of legitimacy, and the actions of the member states of the EU and NATO pursuing self-interests compel us to define their leadership as 'bad'. Even though both have visions and the skills to achieve that vision, the inability to use these skills at maximum capacity or with some limitations manifests itself in their operative roles in the African continent. Local and regional ownership – not only through effective cooperation on the ground but also through establishing co-decision-making procedures among all the multilateral actors i.e. the AU, the EU, and NATO – would increase the effectiveness of operational capacities in Africa. Yet the actuality of the international system abates the possibility of achieving this type of collaboration.

## References

- African Union (2002) *Constitutive Act of African Union*. Available at [https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutiveact\\_en.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/34873-file-constitutiveact_en.pdf) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- African Union (2014) *4th EU–Africa Summit*. Available at <https://africa-eu-partnership.org/en/our-events/4th-eu-africa-summit> (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- African Union (n.d.) *Financing the Partnership*. Available at <https://africa-eu-partnership.org/en/about-us/financing-partnership> (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Aris, S. and König, K. (2018) 'Long-distance Relationships: African Peacekeeping', *CSS Analyses in Security Policy*, no. 236 [Online]. Available at <https://css.ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/special-interest/gess/cis/center-for-securities-studies/pdfs/CSSAnalyse236-EN.pdf> (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Asmus, D.R., Kugler, R.L., and Larabee, F.S. (1993) 'Building a New NATO', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 72, pp. 28–40.
- Binnendijk, H. and Koster, T.S. (2020) *NATO Needs a New Core Task* [Online]. Available at [www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2020/07/22/nato-needs-a-new-core-task/](http://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2020/07/22/nato-needs-a-new-core-task/) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Brosig, M. (2014) 'EU Peacekeeping in Africa: From Functional Niches to Interlocking Security', *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 74–90.
- Council of the European Union (2011) *Council Conclusions on the Horn of Africa*, Brussels, European Council [Online]. Available at [www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/126052.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/126052.pdf) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Daalder, I. and Goldgeier, J. (2006) 'Global NATO', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 85, no. 5, pp. 105–113.
- Dellmuth, L.M. and Tallberg, J. (2018) 'Why National and International Legitimacy Beliefs are Linked: Social Trust as an Antecedent Factor', *The Review of International Organizations*, vol. 15, pp. 311–337.
- Dembinski, M. and Schott, B. (2013) 'Converging Around Global Norms? Protection of Civilians in African Union and European Union Peacekeeping in Africa', *African Security*, vol. 6, no. 3–4, pp. 276–296.
- Djire, M., Sow, D., Gakou, K. and Camara, B. (2017) *Assessing the EU's Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Interventions in Mali*, Bamako, WOSCAP Enhancing EU Peacebuilding Capabilities [Online]. Available at [www.woscap.eu/documents/131298403/131299900/Mali+-+USJPB.pdf/Mali+%20-%20USJPB/index.pdf](http://www.woscap.eu/documents/131298403/131299900/Mali+-+USJPB.pdf/Mali+%20-%20USJPB/index.pdf) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- European Commission (2020) *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa*, Brussels, High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy [Online]. Available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020JC0004&from=FR> (Accessed 11 November 2020).

- European Commission (n.d.-a) *Africa-EU Cooperation*. Available at [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/africa-eu-cooperation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/africa-eu-cooperation_en) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- European Commission (n.d.-b) *Africa-Europe Alliance*. Available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/africaeuropealliance\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/africaeuropealliance_en) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- European Commission (n.d.-c) *Mali*. Available at [https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/where-we-work/mali\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/where-we-work/mali_en) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- European Council (2017) *Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development*, Abidjan. Available at [www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31991/33454-pr-final\\_declaration\\_aeu\\_eu\\_summit.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31991/33454-pr-final_declaration_aeu_eu_summit.pdf) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Gebhard, C. and Smith S.J. (2015) 'The Two Faces of EU – NATO Cooperation: Counter-piracy Operations off the Somali Coast', *Cooperation and Conflict*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 107–127.
- Græger, N. (2016) 'European Security as Practice: EU – NATO Communities of Practice in the Making?', *European Security*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 478–501.
- Gray, C. (2005) 'Peacekeeping and Enforcement Action in Africa: The Role of Europe and the Obligations of Multilateralism', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 31, pp. 207–223.
- Grunstein, J. (2008) *EUFOR Chad: A Step Forward for European Defense*, World Politics Review [Online]. Available at [www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/1847/eufor-chad-a-step-forward-for-european-defense](http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/1847/eufor-chad-a-step-forward-for-european-defense) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Igwe, S.C., Lee Abdullah M.A.I., Kirmanj, S., Fage, K.S. and Bello, I (2017) 'An Assessment of the Motivations for the 2011 NATO Intervention in Libya and Its Implications for Africa', *Canadian Social Science*, vol. 13, no. 4, pp. 1–12.
- Karlsrud, J. and Smith, A.C. (2015) *Europe's Return to UN Peacekeeping in Africa? Lessons from Mali*, New York, International Peace Institute [Online]. Available at <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/52119861.pdf> (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Kotterman, J., (2006) 'Leadership vs Management: What's the Difference?', *Journal for Quality and Participation*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 13–17.
- Kouzes, J.M. and Posner, B.Z. (2002) *The Leadership Challenge*, 3rd edition, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.
- Marsili, M. (2019) *Towards a Strategic EU–NATO Security Partnership in Africa*, Lisbon, Estoril Political Forum 2019 (EPF 2019) – 27th International Meeting in Political Studies [Online]. Available at <https://iep.lisboa.ucp.pt/asset/4401/file> (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Michel, L. (2007) 'NATO-EU Cooperation in Operations', *NATO Research Paper*, no. 31, pp. 2–4.
- NATO (2004) *The NATO-EU Strategic Partnership*. Available at [www.nato.int/docu/comm/2004/06-istanbul/press-kit/006.pdf](http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2004/06-istanbul/press-kit/006.pdf) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- NATO (2015) *NATO Mediterranean Dialogue*. Available at [www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_60021.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_60021.htm)? (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- NATO (2016) *Joint Declaration by the President of the European Council, the President of the European Commission, and the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. Available at [www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133163.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133163.htm) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- NATO (2018) *Brussels Summit Declaration*. Available at [www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_156624.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_156624.htm) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- NATO (2019) *Cooperation with the African Union*. Available at [www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_8191.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8191.htm) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Norheim-Martinsen, P. M. (2011) 'Our Work Here Is Done: European Union Peacekeeping in Africa', *African Security Review*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 17–28.
- NSD-S Hub Mission (n.d.) *A Meeting room for Peace and Stability*. Available at <https://thesouthernhub.org/about-us/mission> (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Pepper, A. (2015) 'Africa: A Region for Enhanced NATO-EU Cooperation', *NATO Research Paper*, no. 114.
- Rein, C. (2015) 'The EU and Peacekeeping in Africa: The Case of AMISOM', *Global Affairs*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 193–204.
- Sayle, T.A. (2016) "'A Great List of Potential Mistakes": NATO, Africa, and British Efforts to Limit the Global Cold War', *Cold War History*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 19–36.
- Schechter, M. (1987) 'Leadership in International Organizations: Systemic, Organizational and Personality Factors', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 197–220.
- Segell, G. (2011) *The First NATO Mission to Africa: Darfur*, London, Security Policy Study Book 13.
- SHAPE NATO (n.d.) *NATO's Operations 1949 – Present*. Available at <https://shape.nato.int/resources/21/NATO%20Operations,%201949-Present.pdf> (Accessed 11 November 2020).

- Simon, L., Mattelaer, A., and Hadfield A. (2012) *A Coherent EU Strategy for the Sahel*, Brussels, Directorate-General for External Policies [Online]. Available at [www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2012/433778/EXPO-DEVE\\_ET\(2012\)433778\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/etudes/join/2012/433778/EXPO-DEVE_ET(2012)433778_EN.pdf) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Stabile, A.A., Lasconjarias, G. and Sartori, P. (2018) 'NATO-EU Cooperation to Project Stability', *LAI*, no. 18.
- Stahl, A.K. (2011) 'Contrasting Rhetoric and Converging Security Interests of the European Union and China in Africa', *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, vol. 40, no. 4, pp. 147–173.
- United Nations, Security Council (2011a) Resolution 1970 (S/RES/1970).
- United Nations, Security Council (2011b) Resolution 1973 (S/RES/1973).
- Wang, M., Kusnetz, N., and Beckett, L. (2011) *FAQ: Key Questions on Libya's Coming Transition* [Online]. Available at [www.propublica.org/article/key-questions-about-libya](http://www.propublica.org/article/key-questions-about-libya) (Accessed 11 November 2020).
- Winston, B.E. and Patterson, K. (2006), 'An Integrative Definition of Leadership', *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 6–66.
- Wolff, A.T. (2018) 'Invitations to Intervene and the Legitimacy of EU and NATO Civilian and Military Operations', *International Peacekeeping*, vol. 25, no. 1, pp. 52–78.