



The EU's involvement in Africa

This series of Briefing Papers aims to outline the work of the European Union (EU) in the field of Peacebuilding, how it is involved in Conflict Zones and International Actors (illustrated by Case Studies). The papers are intended to act as an introduction to this topic and to help provide understanding of the EU's work in this field.

The paper outlines the EU's relationship and involvement in the African Continent.

Background to the EU's involvement in Africa

The EU recognises itself as a member of the international community and as a global player. It therefore *"has a political and moral responsibility to act to avoid the human suffering and the destruction of resources caused by violent conflicts"*¹. In its 2003 European Security Strategy (http://ue.eu.int/cms3_fo/showPage.ASP?id=266&lang=EN&mode=g) it identifies the need to address the challenges of regional conflict and failed states, as well as the link between economic problems and violent conflict.

The Cotonou Framework

The EU's involvement in Africa is set out through the Cotonou Agreement. The Cotonou Agreement signed in 2000 and entered into force in 2003, sets up a framework for co-operation between the European Community, and its Member States, with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). The Agreement replaces the Lomé Convention, which governed the EU's relations with the ACP countries² from 1975.

The goals of the Agreement are to promote and expedite the economic, social and cultural development of the ACP States, contribute to peace and security and promote a stable and democratic political environment³. Article 11 of the Agreement on 'Peace-building policies, conflict prevention and resolution' states: *"The Parties shall pursue an active, comprehensive and integrated policy of peace-building and conflict prevention and resolution within the framework of the Partnership"*⁴.

The EU-Africa Partnership

In 2000 the EU-Africa Partnership was set up. Described as *"a new dialogue with Africa to build a strategic partnership with the entire continent"*⁵ the aims of the dialogue are to:

- strengthen political, economic and socio-cultural EU-Africa relations;

¹ EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, 2001, <http://www.eu2001.se/static/eng/pdf/violent.PDF>

² SCADPlus: African, Caribbean and Pacific states (ACP): introduction, <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12100.htm>

³ SCADPlus: Cotonou Agreement, <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12101.htm>

⁴ 22000A1215(01) - 2000/483/EC: Partnership agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000 - Protocols - Final Act - Declarations, [http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:22000A1215\(01\):EN:HTML](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:22000A1215(01):EN:HTML)

⁵ SCADPlus: EU-Africa partnership, <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12106.htm>

- eradicate poverty and attain the Millennium Development Goals in Africa, as well as implementing commitments recently made in international conferences (Doha, Monterrey and the World Summit on Sustainable Development);
- promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Africa.

To this end the dialogue is organised around priority themes including the prevention and settlement of conflicts (the others are human rights, democracy and good governance, food security, HIV/AIDS and other pandemics, environment, regional integration and trade, external debt, the return of illicitly exported cultural goods)⁶.

Meetings between the EU and African states were planned to occur through Summits. While the first summit took place in October 2001 the Council of the EU indefinitely postponed the second, planned for April 2003. A document on the EU-Africa dialogue produced by the Luxembourg Presidency of the European Union indicates that there are “*political circumstances currently impeding the holding of a Summit*”⁷. Ministerial Meetings have also occurred as part of the EU-Africa dialogue. The most recent of these occurred on 2 December 2005. Peace and Security issues were discussed at the meeting including the conflict situations in Africa, promoting peace and resolving conflicts, and terrorism. Other topics at the meeting included governance, regional integration and trade, development issues and how to improve the dialogue⁸.

The African Union has been an important development for the dialogue. Created in March 2003 the African Union, while not representing the whole of Africa, “*provides a framework for, and strengthens, political and economic regional cooperation and integration between African countries*”⁹. In the previously mentioned document produced by the Luxembourg Presidency the EU welcomed the establishment and objectives of the African Union.

European Development Fund

The European Development Fund is “*the main instrument for Community aid for cooperation in the ACP Countries*”¹⁰. The EDF was created in 1957 by the Treaty of Rome, and was intended to provide financial assistance to African countries that at the time were colonies and had historical links with European countries. Funding is provided by EU Member States and the budget is set out in agreements in the Council of the European Union that are later ratified by the Member State Parliaments. The European Commission plays a key role in the management of the fund.

Further information on the European Development Fund is available at:
<http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12102.htm>

Country and Regional Strategy papers

The EU’s involvement in the ACP Region and Countries is set out in its Country and Regional Strategy papers (CSP/RSP). The CSPs and RSPs are “*the EU’s primary programming documents for allocation and implementation of external aid at the country and regional level. Developed in collaboration with EU Delegations in the countries/regions concerned, the partner state and civil society*”¹¹.

A full list of Country and Regional Strategy papers is available at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/sp/

⁶ SCADPlus: Taking EU-Africa dialogue forward, <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12109.htm>

⁷ Luxembourg Presidency - EU non-paper on EU-Africa Strategic Partnership, http://www.eu2005.lu/en/actualites/documents_travail/2005/04/11ue-afrique/

⁸ EU@UN - EU-Africa Ministerial meeting, http://europa-eu-un.org/articles/pt/article_5420_pt.htm

⁹ SCADPlus: EU-Africa partnership, <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12106.htm>

¹⁰ *European Development Fund*, 12 October 2001, <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/r12102.htm>

¹¹ *Developing an EU strategy to address fragile states: Priorities for the UK Presidency of the EU 2005* (Joint Report by the EPLO-Members Saferworld and International Alert, July 2005), p.59
<http://www.eplo.org/documents/UKUEUPresidencyPaper2005.pdf>

Important Developments

In the area of peacebuilding there have been two important developments in regards to the EU's involvement in Africa.

Operation Artemis

In June 2003 the EU deployed a military operation to Bunia, capital of Ituri, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). As noted by the International Security Information Service (ISIS) this mission was significant for two reasons. The operation codenamed Artemis was the first 'autonomous' (independent of NATO) EU military mission and was the first European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) deployed outside of Europe¹².

Operation Artemis deployed 14,000 personnel with the objectives of contributing to the stabilising of the security conditions, improving the humanitarian situation, and protecting refugees. This was a temporary mission of 3 months until handing over to the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic (UN MONUC) in September 2003.

While the operation can be viewed as a success, the operation highlighted several issues of concern. Specifically the mission with its limited mandate did not address the wider security and political issues in the region that were contributing to the conflict. There was a missed opportunity to link the short-term military intervention with longer-term peacebuilding.

A Case Study of Operation Artemis in the DRC can be found in the 2004 report by Saferworld/International Alert on Enhancing EU Impact on Conflict Prevention, "*Strengthening Global Security Through Addressing the Root Causes of Conflict*", available to download from: www.saferworld.org.uk/publications/EU_presidency_04_irish_dutch.pdf

A full report on the lessons learned from Operation Artemis is available from the United Nations Peacekeeping Best Practices website at: <http://pbpu.unlb.org/PBPU/Document.aspx?docid=572>

The African Peace Facility

In April 2004 the EU set up the African Peace Facility, a funding mechanism that allocates € 250 million from the European Development Fund to "*finance peacekeeping operations in Africa and is led, operated and staffed by Africans*". The Facility is an African Initiative and was requested by the African Union¹³.

While it is clear, as Chris Patten said in a speech to the Overseas Development Institute in 2003, that there is "*no development without peace*", the establishment of the facility does raise the question of whether funds that have been allocated for development should be used to support peace and security needs. In an article for the 2005 January edition of *Around Europe*¹⁴, the QCEA Newsletter, Martina Weitsch, QCEA Representative, outlines her concerns about the EU using "*much needed and woefully lacking*" development funds to further security interests, and suggests that they should consider finding additional funds, possibly from Member States' military budgets, to fund peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

¹² *Operation Artemis: Mission Improbable?* ISIS Europe - European Security Review, Number 18, July 2003, <http://www.isis-europe.org/ftp/download/operation%20artemis,%20mission%20improbable%20-%20esr%2018.pdf>

¹³ *Securing Peace and Stability for Africa, The EU-Funded African Peace Facility*, European Commission, DG Development, 2004, http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/publications/docs/flyer_peace_en.pdf

¹⁴ '*The African Peace Facility - What issues does it raise?*' *Around Europe* No. 268, January 2005, <http://quaker.org/qcea/aroudeurope/2005/268.htm#Second>