

CSDP: getting third states on board

by Thierry Tardy

The November 2013 Foreign Affairs Council welcomed the ‘valuable contributions and political support of partner countries to CSDP missions and operations’. A few weeks later, a Ukrainian frigate began patrolling within EUNAVFOR Atalanta, and Georgia committed approximately 140 personnel to the recently-established EU operation in the Central African Republic (CAR). In Bosnia, Turkey has long been a major contributor to EUFOR Althea, while countries like Norway or Canada regularly provide civilian personnel to CSDP missions. These countries have all signed a Framework Participation Agreement (FPA) with the EU, which provides the legal and political basis for such cooperation.

To date, this type of partnership remains limited in scope and has thus been given little visibility. Moreover, whilst the contributions of partner countries may provide targeted responses to EU shortfalls, they can also be problematic for a variety of reasons. Yet despite these setbacks, third party involvement in CSDP missions can be seen as a means to bolster the overall legitimacy of the EU’s international security role and should be understood in the context of a broader CFSP agenda.

Third states in CSDP

Approximately forty-five non-EU states have participated in CSDP operations since the first mission

(about thirty if the countries that have joined the EU since 2004 are subtracted). Back in 2003, the EU Police Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (EUPM) benefited from the contribution of fifteen third states, among which were ten of the twelve countries that later joined the EU in 2004 and 2007. The first military operation in Africa – Artemis – saw the participation of five third states, most notably South Africa and Brazil. Since then, third states have been present in almost all CSDP operations and missions, albeit with uneven levels of contribution (see Table on page 3). There is no third state involved in the EUMM in Georgia and only one in EUPOL Afghanistan, while more than ten have participated in EUFOR Althea in Bosnia.

All EU candidate countries (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey) have participated in CSDP missions and signed FPAs with the EU – as had most of the thirteen states that joined the EU in 2004, 2007, and 2013 prior to their accession. This is also the case for all non-EU NATO states (Albania, Canada, Iceland, Norway, Turkey, the US), with Canada, Norway and Turkey standing out in particular as contributing countries. Turkey has participated in eight operations and has been a major contributor to EUFOR Althea in Bosnia-Herzegovina, ranking second in terms of numbers with 274 troops deployed in the autumn of 2013. Norway has contributed to ten CSDP missions and is a participating nation in the

Nordic Battle Group, while Canada has also been a regular contributor to EU missions. The United States has contributed to three operations (EULEX Kosovo, EUSEC RD Congo, EUPOL RD Congo), mainly by providing advisors and personnel to assist the work of the police, prosecution and judiciary. Although the United States signed an FPA with the EU in March 2011, due to the country's reluctance to place US troops under non-US command, the agreement only covers 'contributions of civilian personnel, units, and assets by the United States to EU crisis management operations.'

Beyond EU candidates and non-EU NATO states, three regional powers – namely Russia, Brazil and South Africa – have contributed to CSDP operations. The most significant contribution involving one of the BRICS was made by Russia to EUFOR Tchad/RCA in 2008-09, in which it provided airlift capacity. Negotiations on an FPA with Russia were opened some years ago, but are now stalled due to difficulties related to Russian demands on the political and operational modalities of their participation. Brazil and South Africa contributed to operation Artemis in 2003, in both cases with logistical assets. The other two BRICS – China and India – have yet to participate, however cooperation between these two countries and the EU has developed in the context of the anti-piracy operation in the Gulf of Aden.

A fourth grouping of diverse, non-EU participants includes states from Latin America, eastern Europe and Asia, most of which have only contributed symbolically – through either very limited commitments or to missions located in their immediate vicinity. For example, third states from Asia have participated in only one EU operation, the monitoring mission in Aceh (Indonesia) in 2005-06. In contrast, Georgia's participation in EUFOR RCA – or Ukraine's in EUNAVFOR Atalanta – has been much more substantive.

In addition, four third countries (previously five prior to Croatia's accession) are involved in the stand-by Battlegroups (BGs): Turkey was part of the Italian-led BG in the first semester of 2010; Norway has contributed to the Nordic BG since 2008 (first semester 2008 and second semester 2011); Ukraine joined the Greek-led BG (HELBROC) in the first semester of 2011 and of 2014; and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia participated in the German-led BG in the second semester of 2012 (which also included Croatia).

The institutionalisation of partnerships

The drafting of policy guidelines regulating co-operation with non-EU states started as early as 2001, and in December 2002 the Council adopted a document on 'Consultations and Modalities for the Contribution of non-EU States to EU civilian crisis management operations'. As of 2004, the relationship with third states was institutionalised through the signing of FPAs. In addition to the fifteen countries which have finalised such agreements, FPAs are ready to be signed with Australia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, while negotiations are on-going with Brazil, Switzerland, and soon to begin with Colombia. In 2013 the EU's Political and Security Committee (PSC) also endorsed a series of recommendations on CSDP cooperation with third countries. Nevertheless, the network that is being built remains loosely institutionalised as compared, for example, to NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC).

FPAs lay out the legal framework of third states' contributions to EU crisis management operations. They address issues relating to the status of personnel and forces, the modalities of information exchange, the involvement of third states in the decision-making process and conduct of the operations, as well as financial aspects, both for civilian and military operations. As a matter of principle, the contribution of third states to CSDP operations is 'without prejudice to the decision-making autonomy of the Union.' This is both central to the EU's conception of partnership and a source of tension with partners. In

theory, third states have the 'same rights and obligations in terms of day-to-day management of the operation' as EU member states taking part in the operation. As far as finance is concerned, the general principle is that, aside from those costs which are subject to common funding, third countries assume the costs associated with their participation in a given operation.

The drivers

The participation of third countries in CSDP operations is, arguably, mutually beneficial. Depending on their geopolitical agenda and strengths, non-EU states contribute to EU operations for a variety of reasons which range from security interests and the acquisition of operational experience to broader institutional motives. Medium-size or



bigger powers like Turkey or Russia may also hope to influence the EU's policies through their presence in EU operations.

EU candidate countries contribute in order to raise their profile and familiarise themselves with the various components of the EU and its procedures. And for the EU, such involvement allows the Union to interact with future members and thereby establish or deepen operational and political links.

Contributions of third states to CSDP operations

Third states	CSDP operations
Europe/North America	
Albania *	EUFOR Althea, EUFOR Tchad/RCA
Canada *	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL COPPS, EUPOL Kinshasa, EUPOL Afghanistan, Artemis (DRC)
former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia *	EUFOR Althea
Georgia *	EUCAP Nestor, EUTM Mali, EUBAM Libya, EUFOR RCA
Iceland *	EUPM BiH, Concordia
Moldova *	---
Montenegro *	EUNAVFOR Atalanta
Norway *	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL Afghanistan, EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUPOL COPPS, EUPOL Proxima, Concordia, AMM Aceh, EUJUST LEX, EUCAP Nestor
Russia	EUPM BiH, EUFOR Tchad/RCA
Serbia *	EUNAVFOR Atalanta, EUTM
Switzerland	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL Proxima, EUFOR RD Congo, EUPOL RD Congo, AMM Aceh, EUTM Mali
Turkey *	EUFOR Althea, EULEX Kosovo, EUPM BiH, EUPOL Proxima, Concordia, EUFOR RD Congo, EUPOL Kinshasa
United States *	EULEX Kosovo, EUSEC RD Congo, EUPOL RD Congo
Ukraine *	EUPM BiH, EUPOL Proxima, EUNAVFOR Atalanta

Third states	CSDP operations
Latin America	
Argentina	EUFOR Althea
Brazil	Artemis (DRC)
Chile *	EUFOR Althea
Dominican Republic	EUFOR Althea
Africa	
Angola	EUPOL Kinshasa, EUPOL RD Congo
Mali	EUPOL Kinshasa
Morocco	EUFOR Althea
South Africa	Artemis (DRC)
Asia/Oceania	
Brunei	AMM Aceh
Malaysia	AMM Aceh
New Zealand *	EUFOR Althea, EUPOL Afghanistan
Philippines	AMM Aceh
Singapore	AMM Aceh
South Korea *	---
Thailand	AMM Aceh

* Countries which have signed an FPA with the EU.

Source: data compiled by the author from various sources.

For NATO countries, while contributing to EU missions may be interpreted as a recognition of the EU's role in crisis management (including in the military sphere), it is also a demonstration of solidarity among states belonging to the same security community. As both an EU candidate and a regional power that is trying to reconcile its commitment to 'soft' crisis management with its aspiration to play a leading role in its periphery (in particular in the Balkans), Turkey appears to be a special case in this regard.

Beyond the will to acquire operational experience, countries like Ukraine or Georgia – but also Brazil or South Africa – are motivated by the necessity to raise their international profile through a constructive crisis management role where national security interests are not necessarily (or directly) at stake. In the case of Georgia, the country's contribution to both NATO and EU operations is also a way to serve the country's Euro-Atlantic aspirations.

From an EU perspective, working with partners contains two primary dimensions: one is capacity-related, the other is more political. In



terms of capacity, partnerships bring personnel, assets and expertise that the EU may be lacking. Often found struggling to staff its own missions, the EU enlarges the pool of possible contributors through partnerships.

The contribution of Russia to EUFOR Tchad/RCA is a case in point, while Georgia's contribution to EUFOR RCA was also welcomed as it filled a gap in the EU force generation process. The type of expertise or niche capabilities provided by countries like Norway, Canada, Switzerland or the US is also of value to the EU's broad-ranging agenda. Reciprocally, partnerships have also allowed third countries to benefit from EU capacity-building projects.

Yet the political dimension is probably more important. The visibility and effectiveness of the EU in crisis management partly relies on its capacity to attract non-EU countries and institutionalise relationships with them. To some extent, a wide network of partners attests to the growing importance of the EU's role in a 'market' where other institutions (such as the UN, NATO or the OSCE) also operate. By nature, non-member states' participation in EU operations requires a certain degree of acceptance of EU practices as well as a degree of subordination.

This is a clear demonstration of the 'soft' power wielded by the EU – by nature appealing rather than threatening – at work. The legitimacy of EU operations is partly a function of the size of the community of states that the EU is able to bring together. As for all multilateral organisations, the long-term success of crisis management needs to combine the effectiveness of a limited but reliable number of stakeholders with the legitimacy that stems from collegiality.

The limits

This said, the material or political gains of this form of partnership should not be overstated. First, the input of third states has remained rather limited to date, with the exception of the Turkish, Russian and Georgian contributions to the operations in Bosnia, Chad and the CAR respectively. Most contributions are less than 20 staff and the relatively small size of EU operations leaves little space for a significant third state role without disrupting the overall balance of personnel in the operation.

Second, the management of partnerships is administratively and politically tricky. In administrative terms, it can be disputed if the few experts

delivered per third country are worth the effort. In political terms, while the EU insists that cooperation must be guided by the 'EU's strategic interest' and that partner countries should 'share with the EU common values and principles', the most important potential contributors may have different priorities and therefore become difficult to handle.

The relationship with third countries is further complicated by the very nature of the EU planning and decision-making processes. In practice, third states that are invited to contribute to a CSDP operation are brought on board at a very late stage and are only given full access to all EU-issued documents once their participation has been accepted by the PSC. Informal contacts do take place between the EEAS and the potential partners it has identified. Formally, however, they are not involved in the drafting of the concept of operations (CONOPS) or the operation plan (OPLAN) nor do they participate in force generation conferences. They are invited to contribute – in most cases to fill gaps – but are required to accept the EU's timeline and procedures. Even once the operation is launched, the various mechanisms in place (such as the Committee of Contributors) limits the involvement of partners, effectively reducing them to second-class stakeholders.

This has led to regular complaints – including in the case of the recent CAR operation – about what appear to be fairly asymmetrical relations. Critics also point to how much more successful NATO has been in including third countries in its procedures and institutionalising partnerships.

The EEAS is looking into ways to address the problem, possibly through privileged cooperation with a selection of third countries. Yet the present difficulties are inherent to this kind of partnership, and there will always be limits to the association of non-EU members – not to mention the friction over communicating documents to Turkey.

In essence, cooperation between the EU and third parties is to be seen in the broader context of the EU foreign policy. What is being achieved through partnerships may not be particularly visible or essential to the short-term effectiveness of CSDP, yet it is one dimension of a broader political environment in which the EU is slowly finding its place. To maximise their impact, partnerships in CSDP could therefore benefit from moving from a technical level to a more political one.

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