

# ISIS focus

INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (ISIS) MALAYSIA

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## The European Union's Security Architecture and Its Role to Strengthen Peace and Security

By

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The European Union (EU) is a longstanding partner of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and participates in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Indeed, the EU High Representative has attended the ARF Ministerial Meeting every year since 2012. At the official level, the EU has been more active than ever before, co-chairing ARF meetings and contributing to the implementation of the ARF work plan. This is because we share many concerns about international security, ranging from human trafficking, to risks posed by failed states, maritime security, war fighting and terrorist attacks in the world. And we seek solutions to tackle the wide range of challenges.

At the recent IISS Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Mrs Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, said, "Please do not look at us just as a big free trade area — the European Union is also a foreign policy community, a security and defence provider for our own people ... and with our global partners, Asia included."

In my intervention I will briefly address three topics. Firstly, I will elaborate on the EU's general values, principles and aims. Secondly, I am going to focus on the EU's security architecture. And thirdly, I will talk about the EU's engagement through civilian and military operations and missions.

### Values, policy principles and aims of foreign policy

The EU was set up with the aim of ending the frequent and bloody wars between neighbours, which culminated in the Second World War. Just to recall, 18 million people died in World War I and 60 million died in World War II.

The Union is founded on the values of: (i) respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, and equality; (ii) respect for the rule of law; (iii) respect for human rights;

*"... the European Union is also a foreign policy community, a security and defence provider for our own people ... and with our global partners, Asia included."*

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*Patrick de Rousiers*

and (iv) respect for the rights of persons belonging to minorities. 28 member states — more than 500 million people — have subscribed to these principles. The EU promotes coordination among the member states by defining common policies and actions to preserve peace, prevent conflicts, and assist countries and regions facing natural or man-made disasters.

Of course, the solution to a crisis will always be political. However, establishing a functional state with a security sector and a perspective on stable development requires the provision of training and advice to a wide range of personnel — administration experts, judges, policemen, border control and military. This is a long-term and resource-intensive effort. For this, the EU draws on its full range of instruments in the areas of diplomacy, finances, trade, development and humanitarian aid, and military and civilian security tools.

Based on existing EU strategies for various regions like the Sahel or the Horn of Africa, the EU is using all these tools in a strategically coherent, efficient manner. So the use of military tools is part of a much broader toolbox. This is the so-called comprehensive approach. The combined use of all available tools is one of the greatest strengths of the EU. In addition, over recent years the EU has received more and more support from its partners and has interacted with them through intense strategic dialogues — I will come back to this later.

### **Security architecture**

The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is defined and implemented by the meetings of the 28 European Heads of State and the European Foreign Ministers. European Council decisions on the EU's policy are put into effect by the High Representative and by the member states. The High Representative chairs the monthly meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers and the meetings of the Defence Ministers. In some ways, Mrs Mogherini is the EU's Minister of Foreign Affairs but also the Minister of Defence, in some aspects. Her working body is the EU's External Action Service with about 3,600 personnel. One may consider it as the EU Ministry of Foreign Affairs with responsibilities in the area of civilian and military crisis management as well.

*Since 2003 the EU has been operational in the field and launched 32 military and civilian missions and operations in Europe, Africa, Middle East and even Asia.*

One of the key elements of the EU's security architecture is consensus (unanimity). It is the general rule for all decisions concerning the EU's foreign and security policy, with each EU member state having an equal vote. Consensus is the strength of the EU — when we commit in foreign policy actions, we commit at 28.

The European Union Military Committee (EUMC), which I chair, is the highest military body set up within the EU. It is composed of the Chiefs of Defence of the 28 Member States. This committee provides military advice to the political side. In my role as Military Advisor to the High Representative, I also provide to Mrs Mogherini a personal analysis of ongoing situations and problems based on my professional experience.

It is not always easy or quick to reach a decision in consensus among 28 member states. There are of course regional differences in assessments of security threats in Europe, from the South to the North and from the West to the East. Hence flexibility and concessions are required. However, at the end, we come to sustainable decisions.

The EU maintains diplomatic relations with nearly all countries in the world. A crucial element for information exchange and negotiations is the approximately 140 EU delegations or embassies. Another important element of EU's security architecture is partnerships with countries and organisations, including the Asian region. Cooperation with the United Nations (UN), ASEAN, African Union, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization — although well established — are in constant evolution and development. Cooperation with other Asian regional fora is growing.

### **Role to strengthen peace and security**

Since 2003 the EU has been operational in the field and launched 32 military and civilian missions and operations in Europe, Africa, Middle East and even Asia. In Asia, for example, the EU's monitoring mission in Banda Aceh was launched in 2005 and terminated mid-2012. As of today, the EU employs approximately 7,000 civilian and military personnel in 11 civilian and five military operations.

For Africa, the EU is an important security provider. Nine civilian and military operations and missions function to train and strengthen the African security capabilities in different countries and to help protect sea lines of communication against pirates. More than 8,000 African military personnel and hundreds of civilian government personnel have been trained within the last five years. As of today, approximately 3,500 military troops are serving in five EU military operations in Africa and in the Balkans.

At the same time, the EU is running 11 civilian missions, which provide support to the Security Sector Reform in various countries as well as monitoring capabilities as the EU does in its civilian missions in Georgia or Ukraine.

Also, the EU Naval Operation Atalanta has been tackling piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Indian Ocean since 2008. This operation is quite a success story as there have been no successful pirate attacks since 2012.

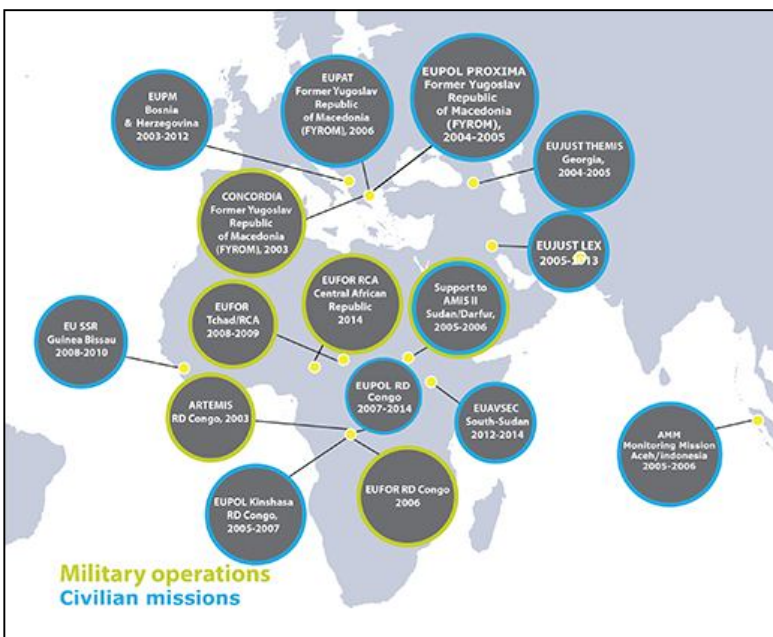
On land, in Mogadishu, in Somalia, the EU Training Mission is helping to build up new Somali Armed Forces. Over the past years, the EU has trained approximately 4,000 Somali military personnel. Around the Horn of Africa, the EU is helping to build local maritime capacity through the civilian EUCAP Nestor mission, which trains Coast Guards of various countries.

The EU's comprehensive engagement includes a financial contribution to the African

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Ongoing missions and operations (as of June 2015)

Completed missions and operations



Source: European Union, European External Action Service (EEAS), Security & Defence

Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) of more than 700 million Euros. Additional money is provided through the EU's Development and Humanitarian Assistance funds. More than one billion Euros have been spent in the region over recent years.

Similarly, in Mali, there is both an EU military operation (EUTM Mali) and an EU civilian mission (EUCAP Sahel Mali). These missions help to strengthen the armed forces and security forces of the country.

In the Central African Republic, the EU launched a military stabilising operation upon request from the UN at the beginning of April 2014. This was a crucial one-year bridging operation for the UN. It was recently followed by the EU military advisory mission, which supports the Central African authorities in preparing a reform of the security sector of their armed forces.

Last, but most certainly not least, the EU's engagement through about 900 troops in the Balkans, namely in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has guaranteed a safe and secure environment for the population for more than 10 years.

More recently, it is the dreadful situation which migrants are put into in the Mediterranean Sea which is of great concern for the EU. Therefore, the Council decided to reinforce our capacity to save lives at sea through Frontex (the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the EU) and also to establish a military operation to contribute to disrupt the business model of human trafficking. The planning for a military operation has started in order to prepare for the launch of EUNAVFOR Med — the EU naval operation to disrupt human smuggling networks in the Mediterranean.

The EU operations enjoy a high reputation as more and more partners are contributing personnel and capabilities. So far, there are 18 partner countries, which have been contributing to the EU's military operations, and the number is growing.

I have just returned from South Korea, which has signed a Framework Participation

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Agreement with the EU. South Korea is going to provide naval forces alongside our Anti-Piracy Operation in the Horn of Africa. That mission is a good example of how we work with a broad array of partners like China, Japan, New Zealand, and others. Even South American countries are going to commit. Furthermore, interacting with partners is also about “strategic dialogue” as we are facing very similar threats and challenges and can only benefit from the significant exchange of views in such matters.

## Conclusion

The EU’s external action to promote security follows five C’s:

1. Capabilities, which are wide-ranging;
2. Comprehensiveness of its actions;
3. Consensus in its decision-making;
4. Cooperation with partner organisations and partner countries; and
5. Credibility as a partner to organise its missions well and promote democracy and human rights.

Let me conclude by quoting Mrs Mogherini:

“That is why we are here. Not for an attempt to change geography and pretend we are part of the region — we limit our ambitions to the reasonable ones — but because we know that we need each other in today’s world. So, count on us. Count on Europe, as we count on you. We want to be engaged in Asia, we want to partner with Asia, and I know that together we can work for Asia, for Europe and for a world more stable, prosperous and peaceful.”

*This article was adapted from General Patrick de Rousiers’ Luncheon Address at the 29<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Roundtable in Kuala Lumpur on 2 June 2015.*

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