European Union Member State influence over IMF lending decisions: An invisible tool of the CFSP?

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Abstract:

This paper examines the correlation between the dispersal of IMF loans and the changing voting behaviour of 29 states that have altered their position on the UN General Assembly resolutions on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty between 2007 and 2014. 14 of those 29 states received IMF loans during the period 2008 to 2014, of which in 12 cases the receiving state changed its position to be more in favour of the moratorium. While not rejecting the role of domestic politics and norm diffusion, it focuses on the correlation to build a plausibility study into the use of IMF loans as a foreign policy tool. It is argued that the importance of the death penalty in the foreign policy of the European Union and the United States has asymmetrical salience, thus making it one of the few cases in which the literature on US influence over IMF lending decisions can be tested on another actor, namely the EU, while controlling for American interests.

Keywords: IMF, UNGA, EU, CFSP, death penalty

The study of European Union (EU) foreign policy has for over a decade paid considerable attention to the multilateral system, both as a stage on which it can demonstrate its actorness, and as a platform to promote its interests. This makes sense, since many of the constitutive elements of the EU's international identity – promotion of peace, human rights, democracy, open trade, environmental and social protection – are also core principles of the multilateral system established at the end of WWII centred around the United Nations (UN). The literature has developed around a number of strands of research, broadly classified into policies (such as the trade), legal arranges and competencies (Community/Union, shared, mixed or member state and consequently membership status) or institutions (such as the UNGA, ILO, WHO). Oftentimes these strands are intertwined, for example in the study of the impact of WTO rules on European agriculture policy, or of environmental negotiations in which member states and the European Commission switch roles between agents and principals (Delarue 2011). In the majority of this work, different strands of research overlap in the same way circles do on a Venn diagram – taking the scope of each naturally incorporates aspects of how the EU takes decisions (its institutional structure and legal distribution of competencies), the substance of the decisions (policy) and the part of the multilateral system championing them (institution). This paper departs from the question: do powerful actors in the multilateral system bargain with other actors to get their interests served by log-roll between seemingly separate policy areas and distinct institutions? Specifically, it asks whether the EU uses loans from the IMF to encourage states to vote in favour of resolutions calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty in the UN General Assembly between 2007 and 2014. The two major contributions of this paper are firstly to expand the scope of research into the EU as an actor into the multilateral system beyond the limits of the 'visible' and expected cross-overs between institutions, and secondly to establish whether the evidence in the literature that the United States uses IMF loans to buy support in the UNGA and UNSC 'travels' to other powerful actors within the multilateral system – in this case the EU.

Expectations in the literature point mostly in the opposite direction from the argument presented. From a normative perspective, the assumption is that the EU uses persuasion and force of argument to promote its positions, especially in an area such as the death penalty that was the case study in Manner's original article on Normative Power Europe (Manners 2002). While there is evidence of the EU using material incentives to encourage actors to adopt human rights standards (such as GSP+ access to European markets in return for successful implementation of ILO core conventions Orbie and Tortell 2009), this operates within the EU's sphere of activity (market access) rather than influencing decision making in an international organisation. Moreover, the idea that the EU can influence IMF lending decisions seems far-fetched if one accepts the conclusions of Gehring et al who say that 'the EU is not recognised as a relevant actor within the IMF' (Gehring et al 2013: 860). He and his co-authors' findings are more accurate when one looks at formal EU representation through Union actors. In the IMF, the ECB has limited observer status. Yet as the recent *Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy* recognises, the 'orchestration' of EU member states coordinated actions to serve EU common goals is an important contribution to EU policy action (EEAS 2016: 43). As this paper will argue, there is considerable evidence of EU member states acting to support national interests – the question is to what extent do they orchestrate to support common interests?

Studying decision-making in the IMF is fraught with difficulties, primarily because decisions in the Fund's Executive Board are taken by consensus and minutes of meetings are released to the public on a limited basis after considerable delay.[1] The most frequently used method in the literature to study the politics of lending is statistical correlations between loan dispersal and state behaviour (such as UNSC membership, UNGA voting, etc). The data presented in this paper, although only preliminary, does suggest a high degree of correlation between shifting voting preferences and receiving IMF loans, based on analysing the 29 states that changed their voting position in the UNGA resolutions on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty, where change constitutes a shift from the 2007 voting position in at least one of the four subsequent votes (2008, 2010, 2012, 2014). Neither of the two states that *hardened* in their positions received loans. Of the 14 states have shifted to an *affirmative* vote, 13 are IMF members (Nauru is not) and nine have received IMF

[1] On example of research drawing on evidence from EB meetings is Gould 2003.

loans in that time and eight switched voting at the next available voting opportunity (Togo switched in second subsequent resolution). Of the 13 states that have shifted from a negative vote to an *abstention* at some point, five have received IMF loans and shifted immediately afterwards. Among the 13, five changed their position more than once and shall be discussed in more detail below. Additionally, within the 29, 16 are ACP states and of those, 10 received loans before changing their votes. While it is important not to confuse correlation with causation, this paper argues that as a plausibility probe for future research, there is considerable potential.

The paper is structures in five parts. The first part briefly discusses the literature to date on the EU and the IMF, which from the EU FP perspective is focused on the lack of coherence between EU member states on the Executive Board and the need for more formal representation, and the IPE perspective is focused on lending decisions and the interests of Britain, France and Germany as G-5 members. The second surveys the literature empirically demonstrating the influence of the US over IMF lending and correlating it with UNGA voting patterns or UNSC membership, as well as defining the criteria for selecting a suitable case study for testing the argument that the EU uses IMF loans to further its foreign policy goals. The third part presents a brief history of EU action in the UN system towards abolition the death penalty, and why it is a suitable test case for the argument. The fourth presents the data and the fifth concludes.

I. The European Union and the IMF

Research on the role of the European Union and its member states in the IMF tends to focus on four issues. The first is the creation of the euro and its potential to challenger the hegemony of the dollar (Helleiner 2008). The second is the potential for European states to have a greater impact on the Fund's decision making, commensurable to their collective voting size and ambition for a common foreign policy. These include advocating a single representative (McNamara & Meunier 2002), more preparatory coordination (Bini Smaghi 2004, 2009), developing the EU into a balancer of the US (Garnier *et al.* 2006), and calculating voting power (Leech & Leech 2005; Pisani-

Ferry 2009). The third has been to assess the lack of formal European representation at the Fund, which is limited to the ECB having observer status to attend meeting relevant to the eurozone currency bloc. Broome (2013) identifies the legal constraints on EU membership, as well as EU member states' reluctance to cede influence to a Union representative. Finally, there is the recent literature assessing the close collaboration between the European Commission, ECB and IMF over the last seven years of the Eurozone crisis (Rogers 2012, Pisani-Ferry et al 2013, Hodson 2014). The first, second and third strands see the EU has having little influence in the IMF and therefore, we would assume, little capacity to influence lending decisions. While the fourth strand does document strong evidence of EU influence over lending decisions, it is limited to loans to eurozone members.

The perennial problem of defining EU actorness is especially apparent in the study of the IMF. As the brief literature review above mentions, there is very little 'EU' in the 24-person Executive Board responsible for taking decisions concerning the issuing of loans, the conditionality attached, and overseeing the results of IMF surveillance of its members economies. The ECB received its observer status on the eve of the euro's creation on the grounds that it would not be possible to scrutinise the performance of EU member states using the euro entirely individually, despite a number of states (including Germany and France) arguing that the IMF must proceed in that manner because they are IMF members, not the Union (Broome, 2013). But according to the commonly used benchmark to assess the capacity of the EU to act in international organisations – the legal arrangements for its representation (Hoffmeister 2007) – the EU scores very poorly. Gehring et al (2013) argue against this view, positing instead that 'action capacity' is more useful measure of EU relevance in a given organisation, comprised of both 'autonomy in goal formation' and 'control over a significant amount of governance resources' (2013: 852). Despite changing the assessment criteria, they too conclude that 'the EU is not recognised as a relevant actor within the IMF' (Ibid. 860).

This perception of the EU being marginal to the IMF is not universally endorsed. One cannot overlook the significance of the Managing Director, who while not representing the EU can nevertheless speak for European interests, such as Dominique Strauss Kahn's influence over changing the rules on Exceptional Access Policy (EAP) in May 2009 that facilitated lending to Greece, Ireland and Portugal and has only been applied those countries, despite (in theory) universal application. Broome (2013) argues that, following Barnett and Finnemore (2004), the staff of the Fund used entrepreneurial strategies to develop informal ties with the European Commission while working in Hungary, Latvia and Romania in late 2008/early 2009 as a launch pad for the Troika system used afterwards. Later, when doubts were raised about the size of loans being offered to EU states, they argument that the wellbeing of the euro was crucial to the wellbeing of the global economy was used, referring back to the core mandate (and the revised EAP text). The development of the Troika turned upside down the idea that EU member states are the primary interlocutors with the IMF (as is the formal picture in Washington). Hodson argues makes that 'the IMF can be conceptualised as a de facto institution of the EU' (2014: 9) based on the fact that the ESM treaty considers the IMF to be 'a delegated monitor that will work alongside the Commission and the ECB to monitor the conditions attached to European financial support' (2014: 8). Pisani-Ferry and his colleagues concur that the Commission exerts considerable influence over the IMF in the design of structural reform programmes of EU member states (Pisani-Ferry et al. 2013), leading us to the conclusion that the EU (through the agency of the European Commission) is an important actor away from the Washington headquarters.

Finally, Breen (2013) presents empirical evidence to support his claim that France, Germany, Japan, the UK and US, which prior to the 1 January 2016 quota reforms were the five largest IMF members with a total 37% of the voting share (post 14th General Quota review it has dropped to 35%), have historically used the IMF and its lending facilities to refinance the sovereign debt of states threatening to default on bank loans held with major private banks in New York, London, Tokyo, Paris and Frankfurt, thus serving their national interests. As in previous sovereign debt crises, such as Mexico in 1982 with the US and East Asia in 1997 with Japan, the Eurozone crisis threatened private banks in the France, Germany and the UK. Breen estimates that the Greek government owed $80bn to French banks, $45bn to German banks and $20bn to British banks. 'With such high levels of exposure in some of the most prominent French banks, a Greek exit from the Eurozone would destabilise the entire French banking system, which in turn would undermine the global financial system' (Breen 2013: 111). In response, the big three European states, with the assistance of the Managing Director, secured loans to Greece that were truly colossal, providing €30bn (3212 per cent of Greece's quota). Crucially, we have moved away from analysing the role of the EU qua EU, and instead focus on the capacity of large EU member states to use their influence in the IMF to secure (collective) national interests. One could make a strong case for saying there is no common EU interest in the Eurozone bailouts in the sense that Germany and Greece wanted very different things, and the Troika contains the IMF was forced to greater austerity that it would have advocated independently. Nevertheless, when EU member states want to exert influence over IMF lending decisions, they can.

II. IMF loans and foreign policy

During the 1980s, IPE scholars began conceptualising the international financial system and global capitalism as structural forces capable of impacting on the behaviour of states. In this debate, the IMF and the World Bank played an important role as authoritative institutions that promoted economic liberalisation internationally. Thus questions arose about the extent to which the IMF (and the WB) could be regarded as a purely technical/bureaucratic agency, or one that was being driven by the interests of its largest member. Wade & Venereso's (1998) 'Wall Street-IMF-Treasury complex' relayed the idea that the American interests in both the private banking sector and the federal government were pushing a neoliberal agenda through the IMF. Woods is among those who are more sceptical of an overt US influence over the IMF, asking why would states accept loans if the degree of US influence over them was so conspicuous. This is not to say that she rejects out of hand America capacity to shape the policies of the IMF, rather emphasis is placed on significant informal mechanisms of US control over the IMF (such as around 95% of staff having PhDs from US universities) and self-control by IMF staff to remain in line with the policy goals of its largest member (promotion-seekers liaising with the Treasury over policy goals) (Woods 2003). Gould (2003) challenged the idea that member states were the main drivers of policy, and instead sought to prove 'supplementary financiers' - private banks that lend to states receiving IMF loans based on the credibility of IMF conditionality, could not be overlooked in shaping how Fund lending decisions are taken.

Thacker (1999) broke new ground by empirically testing of US influence over IMF lending by using countries' voting records in the UNGA as a proxy for foreign policy alignment with America, and the corresponding increased likelihood of receiving IMF loans. Similar work has been carried out since, (Oatley & Yackee, 2004; Dreher & Jenson 2007; Moser and Sturm, 2011), as well as studies into the use of IMF loans to buy votes in the UN General Assembly (Dreher & Sturm, 2012) and the UN Security Council (Kuziemko & Werker 2006; Dreher, Sturm & Vreeland 2009). The obvious question to ask is do other powerful states use the IMF to promote foreign policy goals, given that we have seen that G-5 states use the Fund to promote their national interests? There is at least one study to support this claim in the work of Stone, who demonstrated political patronage by both France and the UK with regard to their former African colonies. In his survey of punishments for failing to comply with IMF conditionality, the 'best estimate is that membership of the CFA [franc zone in Africa] decreases punishment durations by nearly 17 months, and membership in the Commonwealth decreases punishment durations by a year' (Stone 2004, 587).

Testing the proposition that European states influence IMF lending decisions in support of EU foreign policy goals requires finding a policy area in which the EU and the US are opposed and of asymmetrical salience to them. By this I mean something that EU cares a great deal about and is willing to spend political capital in achieving, and the US is opposed to, but not enough to actively campaign for its own position. For example, an issue like the International Criminal Court cannot be used given the effort put into bilateral non-extradition treaties by the US (Thomas 2012). One policy issue that fits the necessary criteria is the UNGA resolutions on a moratorium on the use death penalty, where the US has consistently voted against, but variation between states within the US prevents a more active stance being taken, as well as potentially damaging reputational costs of being associated with other states that vote against the resolution, including North Korea, China, Iran, Syria, etc. By contrast, the EU has long worked towards the goal of an international prohibition of the death penalty.

III. The EU and the death penalty

In 1994, the Italian government presented a resolution to the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly calling for the abolition of the death penalty. Although it attracted 49 co-sponsoring states, the resolution failed to gain a majority and some EU member states regarded it as too premature an effort (neither the UK nor Netherlands supported it). In 1997, the Italian government succeeded in passing a resolution on the same issue in the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), in large part due to WEOG, Eastern Europe and Latin American states occupying 26 of the 53 seats. In 1998, Italy steered another resolution through the Committee, and in 1999 the Finnish Presidency presented another in the name of EU member states (Bantekas and Hodgkinson, 2000: 23; Smith, 2006: 160). EU resolutions on other issues were passed in subsequent years, and only women's reproductive rights and gay rights being beyond the scope of cooperation.

In 2005, at the 60th session of the UN General Assembly, the decision was taken to replace the UNCHR with the Human Rights Council. A number of steps were taken to depoliticise the promotion of HR, including allocating more seats to Asian and African countries to more accurately reflect UN membership. Despite higher levels of voting cohesion between EU member states in the HRC than were achieved in the UNCHR, the EU repeated found itself in the minority because of the rebalancing of region constituencies (Gowan and Brantner, 2008, Kissack, 2010, Smith, 2010, Grasay and Spolander, 2012, Macaj 2012). Faced with difficulties in the HRC, EU member states made a surprising strategic decision. Beginning in 2006, the EU campaigned for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty in the UNGA, a venue typically seen as the bastion of the Global South and the very antithesis of frozen privilege (Kissack, 2010; 2012). It was an unlikely place to promote such a divisive issue as ending the use of the death penalty. Nevertheless, Finland read a statement with 87 co-signatory states to the General Assembly in support of such a step. It was the start of a campaign that continues to the present day, slowly but surely heading toward a tipping-point where the norm of restricting the use of the death penalty will be widely accepted (Finnimore and Sikkink 1998).

In 2007, the Portuguese EU Presidency coordinated the drafting of a resolution on the death penalty to be presented to the General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs). If passed there, it would be taken to the General Assembly. Italy had attempted the same thing in 1994, but failed to gain even the support of all 12 EU member states, let alone the majority of UN members. The death penalty is a permitted punishment under international law and traditionally seen as a matter of domestic legal practice to be discussed in the General Assembly's Sixth Committee (Legal). Presenting the issue in the Third Committee framed the death penalty as a human rights issue and removed it from the sphere non-intervention in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state into a legitimate issue for UN-level scrutiny under the Charter. As the Ambassador of Singapore said during a Third Committee plenary session discussing the matter in 2008, the 'basic issue in question before us today is not capital punishment per se. That is not at all what this resolution is about. […] It is about whether a country has the right to decide on this matter for itself' (UN, 2008). A resolution calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty and for the UN Secretary General to report on the use of the death penalty worldwide (A/RES/62/149) was passed in 2007. In 2008, a shorter resolution acknowledging the report presented by the Secretary General and calling for the issue to be revisited in two years was also passed. Since then, in 2010, 2012 and 2014, gradually more ambitious resolutions have been passed by greater margins, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Votes in the UNGA 3rd Committee (Social Humanitarian and Cultural Rights) for Resolutions on a Moratorium on the Use of the Death Penalty[2]

	2007	2008	2010	2012	2014
For	104	106	109	111	117
Against	54	46	41	41	37
Abstention	29	34	35	34	34

[2] Third Committee data is used as the primary indicator of voting preference in a given year. Variation with final vote in UNGA is generally +/- 1 or 2 votes, i.e. very similar.

The EU should be acknowledged as a driving force behind the successful campaign to pass the resolutions, but it cannot take all the credit. There are a number of important factors to consider. Firstly, the change in focus from abolition to moratorium nearly broke EU consensus on the resolution before it began. Hawkish HR states, led by Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands, were reluctant to dilute the ambition of the resolution from the 2006 statement. While they were around 20 states short of support, they preferred to wait than concede too early, while Italy advocated a compromise capable of yielding a result (in keeping with its long-term commitment to the issue). The issue was resolved *outside* of the EU27, as Portugal liaised with the nine states co-authoring the resolution, demanding collective control over drafting the resolution without the EU dictating from afar. Portugal used this to gain a high degree of agent autonomy from its 26 member states principals, playing a two-level game (Putman 1988) to force the EU into accepting text agreed by the ten co-authors using 'tied-hands' arguments.

This leads to the second point. The resolution was co-authored by ten states from the five regions of the UN system (Portugal, Albania, Angola, Brazil, Croatia, Gabon, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines and Timor-Leste), making it genuinely trans-regional instead of explicitly European. The composition of states was influenced by the EU Presidency, which utilised relations with Lusophone states to identify co-authors. Other EU member states were assigned third countries to lobby support for the resolution, tapping into linguistic and historical extra-European networks of influence. The passing of the resolution was a major foreign policy achievement for the EU, somewhat ironically given that the co-authors convinced the EU member states that a *lower* EU profile was desirable, so as to discredit opposition grounded in claims of neo-imperialism. The 2008 French EU Presidency oversaw the coordination of co-authors for the following year's resolution, and in recent years (2012 and 2014) the responsibility of coordinating follow up resolutions has been taken up by Chile.

IV. Empirical voting data

In the four votes after 2007, 29 states voted differently from their initial position at least once up to 2014. Of these 29, 21 moved to support the resolution, either by shifting from a negative vote to an abstention (seven), or from an abstention to a vote in favour (14). By contrast, two states hardened their positions against the resolution (Namibia and Swaziland). Four states changed their voting position once and then returned back to their original 2007 position, either reverting back to a vote against after abstaining (Afghanistan, Oman, Papua New Guinea) or reverting back to an abstention (Solomon Islands). Finally, Mauritania changed its position twice voting against in 2007 and 2012 and abstaining in 2008, 2010 and 2014, and the Maldives voted against in 2007 and 2008, in favour in 2010 and abstained in 2012 and 2014.. Annex 1 shows the raw voting data, and in all subsequent analysis Nauru is excluded because it is not an IMF member. Data was gathered on IMF lending decisions between 2008 and 2014 to the remaining 28 states, logging the date of the decision, the type of loan approved, its size and duration. 14 of the 28 states in the sample received loans, of which eight consolidated their position in favour, two consolidated their position as an abstention and four (Afghanistan, Maldives, Mauritania and the Solomon Islands) were among those states to alter their voting more than once. It must be acknowledged that at the present moment, the data only includes positive cases of states changing their voting behaviour – no evidence has been gathered about lending decisions to states that have consistently voted on the resolution. This is not strictly necessary for the current study investigating whether loans were used to incentivise changed voting behaviour. However, without a larger view on loan dispersal it is not possible to accurately say how significant a lending decision is in the universe of all IMF loans issued. In addition, the study as yet has not statistically assessed the likelihood of other plausible reasons by loans could have been issued, to control of alternative explanations, most obviously the global recession beginning in 2008 and throwing poor countries into economic crisis. States may also have received loans through the patronage of the US (c.f. Dreher et al 2009), which in this dataset includes Congo and Chad as non-permanent members of the UNSC during the period of study.

Before looking in detail at the countries that received loans, some mention should be made of those that changed their votes and did not receive IMF loans. Five states voted in favour of the moratorium (Bhutan, Eritrea, Fiji, Nauru and Suriname) and six moved to abstentions (Bahrain, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Thailand and Uganda). Extrapolating from Stone's (2004) analysis, we expect British and French former colonies to be more likely targets of favourable lending arrangements (including loans in return for changing voting behaviour), thus excluding Bhutan, Suriname, Indonesia and Thailand from influence (and Nauru as a non-IMF member). More intuitively, Indonesia, Nigeria and Thailand are too big and powerful to be influenced through IMF loans because to be effective, these must be large; Bahrain is too rich for a loan to have leverage, and Myanmar, Bhutan and Suriname lie outside of the EU's traditional sphere of influence, which is ACP states. When we look at which states did receive loans, it is only Eritrea, Fiji and Uganda that stand out as states that one might have expected to be targeted in this way.

Turning to look at the 14 positive cases of loans and voting change, in 12 cases the change in voting took place *after* receiving the loan. Which way does the causal logic run? Is the loan agreed in return for demonstrating a prior commitment to changing voting behaviour? Or is a change in voting behaviour expected after the loan has been received? In the literature (Dreher et al 2009), election to the Security Council comes before loan dispersal because it is impossible to do it the other way round. Post election to the Council, states receive loans (usually a 12-18 month delay), with dispersal payments over the course of the loan allowing it to be curtained if 'cheating' takes place. Taking this lead, we will analyse only the 12 cases in which the loan was made prior to the change in voting behaviour (thus dropping Jordan and Mauritania). The number of months between the issuing of the loan and the vote in which the vote change took place is measured, and then mean and standard deviations are calculated. The maximum length of time for a change in vote in accordance to the hypothesis is 24 months; any longer and the recipient state has failed to change their voting position at the first opportunity presented as expected. Four calculations were carried out, the first on 12 cases, the second excluding Standby Arrangements (SBA) loans – effectively emergency overdrafts (dropping Mongolia), the third including only ACP states (dropping Afghanistan and the Maldives) and the final excluding loans made in

2008 on the grounds that in order to prepare an IMF loan, there would have been insufficient time bring this to the Executive Board given that the first resolution vote was in December 2007 and the second in December 2008 (dropping Togo and Congo).

Sample	Total Number	Mean	Standard deviation
(1) All loans types	12	11.41 months	8.47 months
(2) Excluding SBA	11	10.6 months	8.4 months
(3) Excluding SBA & only ACP states	9	10.22 months	9.35 months
(4) Excluding SBA, ACP only, loans from 2009 onwards	7	8.43 months	4.43 months

What results emerge from the data? In the first instance, there is relatively little change in either the mean of the standard deviation in the first three calculations. The small change between all loans and excluding SBAs can be explained by the fact that only Mongolia dropped out of the sample, and its SBA of 151m Special Drawing Rights (SDR) was the second largest loan in the sample after the SBA granted to Jordan in 2012 of 1364m SDR, which had already been excluded from the sample as Jordan's voting change came in 2008. Although the Seychelles had received an SBA in 2008 (and an ECF in 2009), because it cast its first vote in 2010 (an abstention), only the most recent ECF loan in 2014 was considered. Similarly, because the Maldives received two loans simultaneously in 2009, and SBA and a smaller exogenous shock facility (ESF), on the basis of the latter it remained in the sample.

The removal of non ACP states (3) was carried out with the expectation that EU member states (especially France and the UK) would have more influence over the lending arrangements and therefore more capacity to use them as leverage for changing voting behaviour. This test removed Afghanistan and the Maldives, and given the enormous US military presence in country in 2011, it seems unlikely that any IMF lending decision would have been taken without the direct consent of Washington. However, removing the two made little difference to the data since their time lag scores were 13 and 12 months respectively, thus increasing the standard deviation. By removing the two 2008 lending decisions (4), the numbers shift quite dramatically.[3] The mean drops to 8.4 months, telling us that on average lending decisions were taken in the Spring prior to the General Assembly votes of the same year, and more importantly, with a SD of only 4.4 months, the variation in decision-timing is much smaller.

The general conclusions from the data are quite surprising. As seen in Table 1, the finely balanced majority that the death penalty resolution secured in 2007 has been gradually consolidated in every subsequent vote through both increasing affirmative votes and a reduction in votes against. Although the total number of cases in this study is small (29), they are significant in terms of the tipping point of support in the General Assembly. Of the 14 states changing to an affirmative vote, 13 were IMF members and nine (70%) received IMF loans in 2008 or later, while for the eight that changed to abstentions, only two received loans.

How plausible is the argument that EU member states used their influence in the IMF to secure loans to countries that were willing to change their voting position on the death penalty resolutions. One issue is the extent to which this data suggests it is probable (since without documental evidence or practitioner interviews it is not possible to be certain) in comparison to alternative explanations equally or more convincing. The two more obvious alternative reasons for why a state changes its voting position in the UN is that either domestic political actors have changed their position (Moravcsik 1997), or some form of norm diffusion is taking place (Finnermore and Sikkink 1998, Simmons and Elkins 2004, Risse 2000). The former are independent decisions to changing voting behaviour and the latter are interdependent decisions to change voting behaviour. Given the fact that around half of the states changing their voting positions received no loans from the IMF, alternative explanations *must* exist. This research is continuing in parallel to assess the

[3] The lending decision to Congo took place on the 8 December 2008, only a few weeks before the General Assembly vote. Given that France held the EU Presidency at the time and was steering the resolution through the 3rd Committee, and the Republic of Congo is a former French colony, it is not beyond the realm of imagination that some informal linkage was made. For the sake of consistency, it remains out of the analysis.

plausibility of regional norm diffusion as a way of explaining changing voting behaviour.

Beyond asking where do the causes of voting change come from, we must also consider why states change voting behaviour. There are two competing answers that spring to mind – material and ideational. Material reasons are those that yield benefits greater than the costs of action, be it domestic political support, international reputational gains, or economic benefits (such as IMF loans). Material reasons can derive from any of the three causal drivers of voting changed suggested here – third party pressure (such as IMF loans but also including any incentive or coercion from an outside actor), norm diffusion and the strengthening of group membership claims, or domestic politics. The second answer is that states do it because their leaders agree with the argument that it is a human rights violation to use the death penalty, i.e. it is a normative decision about the content of the resolution. In this light, there may be costs or benefits to shifting voting, but these are second order concerns to decision makers.

While these are all credible reasons for why a state may change its voting position, the question remains why does a state changes when it does? Domestic politics could prove a strong indicator, with either changes of governments or civil society awareness campaigns provoking a change in national position. Within the norm diffusion literature, the norm cascade phase is when we would expect the majority of laggard states to begin changing their position, but based on the ‘S’ curve of norm diffusion, any point prior to that when fewer states are transition no clues are available to specify when the position of others is important enough to trigger a change. One major strength of the argument presented here is that it can answer why (material gains) and when (after loan dispersal) voting change takes place. The data shows that with the exception of Togo (which is the earliest lending decision in the data set and quite likely too early to be considered as explicitly linked to voting behaviour), every lending decision was preceded a voting change at the next available opportunity (while Togo was 32 months later). In summary, while I am not claiming that lending decisions are a sufficient cause of changing voting on death penalty resolutions, there is strong evidence to suggest that they are a necessary condition in many cases of smaller states (especially ACP states).

V. Conclusion

This paper addresses the important question of why do states change their voting behaviour over time on the UNGA resolution on the use of the death penalty, initially passed in 2007 by 104 votes in favour, rising to 117 in favour in the fourth follow-up vote in 2014. This case appears to be an example of norm diffusion in practice, a gradual increase in the number of states willing to accept a moratorium on its use and that it constitutes a human rights issue within the prevail of UN competence (and not purely a matter of national legal practice and non-intervention in the domestic affairs of sovereign states). One of the unique aspects of this case is the asymmetrical salience of the issue between EU and US policy makers. While the former have placed considerable time and resources working ultimately towards an abolition of the death penalty, within the 50 states of the US there is a wide range of views and consequently while the US votes against, it does not proactively canvas opposition.

A second point of departure in this paper is the widely assumed incapacity of the EU to act in one of the most important organisations in the multilateral system, the IMF. The literature is critical of the poor level of EU institutional representation, especially given the existence of the euro currency, although IPE scholars have demonstrated that the EU have exerted strong influence over the IMF in relation to the bailouts of Greece, Ireland and Portugal, both at the level of the Troika and through Britain, France and Germany’s protection of their private banks. If there is evidence to support the claim that the EU influences lending decisions to support the European economy, does it also that the capacity to influence the lending decisions of the Fund in support of EU common foreign policy goals? Put differently, can the EU do what the US has been doing for decades? Answering this question is methodologically challenging. The minutes of Executive Board meetings where decisions are taken are not publically available, and often the Managing Director interprets the consensus of the Board without a vote, meaning no formal record of where the 24 Directors stood on the issue exists. For this reason, the literature has relied on statistical tests from large datasets correlating lending decisions with, inter alia, UNSC membership, UNGA voting patterns, etc. A final problem to address is identifying a case in which the EU and the US do not share a common foreign policy, yet is of sufficient salience to make EU member states expend political capital on furthering it, while simultaneously the US is indifferent to the policy to prevent it from campaigning against the EU and preventing the EU from using the IMF as a leverage tool. The UNGA death penalty resolutions meet these criteria. The data presented here is preliminary research, and the data set is as yet limited to the 29 states that have changed their voting behaviour from their initial position in 2007 in at least one of the four subsequent votes.

Of the 29 states that altered their votes, 21 changed their position once towards being more in favour of the resolution, 13 shifting to an affirmative vote and 8 from negative votes to abstentions. Two states hardened their positions, and six altered the vote more than once, most often between abstention and voting against. 14 of the 29 states in the sample received IMF loans between 2008 and 2014, nine when to states that shifted to a vote in favour and five when to states shifting towards abstention. Many of the states that shifted their voting behaviour without receiving loans were either large, middle income, or in Asia, indicating limits on EU influence in line with the expectations of the literature that focus should be on ACP states. The correlation sought was the proximity of an IMF loan to a change in voting behaviour, and therefore loans to Jordan and Mauritania were excluded from the analysis because they were received *after* changing their voting position. Of the 12 cases studied, the average length of time between lending decision and vote change was 11.4 months, dropping to 8.4 months when SBA loans and non-ACP states were excluded from the sample, as well as loans issued in 2008. Similarly, the standard deviation fell from 8.5 months to 4.4 months. The logic here was that SBA loans are more likely dispersed as a result of economic instability and that EU states have less discretion over the conditions in which it is offered. Including only ACP states tests the assumption that these are the countries over which most influence is yielded, and removing the 2008 loans was justified on the grounds that it was too soon after the first death penalty resolution (December 2007) vote to effectively use them as leverage on the December

2008 vote. The reduction in both mean and SD tells us that loans are made closer the times of UNGA resolutions, and of course in all cases there was positive correlation between loan dispersal and voting change. In other words, 62.5% of states that have shifted to a more positive position on the death penalty in the four votes since 2008 have been ACP states, and just under 50% of them received IMF loans on average 8 months prior to voting, and in all but the cases of the Seychelles and Sierra Leone, this was the *only* loan they received from the IMF since 2008.

This paper is the first attempt to address this question. There are numerous limits to the work that are recognised and need to be addressed in future research. More rigorous analysis of the loan data, including statistical analysis of the duration, quantity and dispersal dates, as well as conditions attached, would help define the mechanisms through which leverage was applied. Practitioner interviews with decision-makers would give evidence of the intentionality of the linkage between loans and votes, both on the IMF/EU side and also in the receiving states. There also needs to be research carried out to establish if alternative explanations are more or less credible, as well as widening the research to include other UNGA issues that meet the EU/US asymmetrical salience criteria. All work in this direction will help establish to extent to which the EU behaves like the US in the multilateral system, capable of log-rolling incentives between institutions to support its foreign policy goals.

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Annex 1: Changing voting behaviour on death penalty resolutions in Third Committee of UNGA – 2007-2014.

Country	2007	2008	2010	2012	2014
Afghanistan	N	N	A	A	N
Bahrain	N	A	A	A	A
Bhutan	A	A	Y	Y	Y
Cen. Afr. Rep	A	A	_	Y	Y
Chad	A	N	_	_	Y
Comoros	N	N	A	A	A
Congo	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
Eritrea	A	A	A	A	Y
Fiji	A	A	A	A	Y
Indonesia	N	N	N	A	A
Jordon	N	A	A	A	A
Maldives	N	N	Y	A	A
Mauritania	N	A	A	N	A
Mongolia	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Myanmar	N	N	N	N	A
Namibia	Y	Y	A	A	A
Nauru	A	Y	Y	Y	Y
Niger	A	A	_	Y	Y
Nigeria	N	N	A	A	A
Oman	N	A	A	N	N
Papua New Guinea	N	N	A	A	N
Seychelles	_	_	A	_	Y
Sierra Leone	A	A	A	A	Y
Solomon Islands	A	N	A	A	A
Suriname	N	A	A	A	Y
Swaziland	A	N	N	N	_
Thailand	N	N	A	A	A
Togo	A	A	Y	Y	Y
Uganda	N	N	N	N	A

Data from UN/A/C.3/62/L.29 (2007), UN/A/C.3/63/L.19/Rev. 1 (2008), UN/A/C.3/65/L.23/Rev. 1 (2010), UN/A/C.3/67/L.44/Rev. 1 (2012), UN/A/C.3/69/L.51/Rev. 1 (2014)

Country	Voting Change	Voting Pattern	Loan Date	Loan Type	Value SDRm	% Quota	SDR first Dis.	Total Drawn	Duration	Loan/Vote months	Comments
Voting shift to in favour											
C.A.R.	2012	A A _ Y Y	25/06/2012	ECF	41.775	85	6.963	6.963	3	5	
Chad	2014	A N _ _ Y	01/08/2014	ECF	79.92	120	13.31	53.93	3	4	UNSC member 14/15
Rep. Congo	2008	A _ Y Y Y	08/12/2008	PRGF	8.46	10	1.2	8.46	3	1	UNSC member 06/07
Maldives	2010	N N Y A A	04/12/2009	SBA	49.2	490	5.13	8.2	3	12	SBA and ESF combined
			04/12/2009	ESF	8.2			2.05	2	12	This loan is counted in analysis
Mongolia	2010	N N Y Y Y	01/04/2009	SBA	153.3	300	51.1	122.64	1.5	20	
Niger	2012	A A _ Y Y	16/03/2012	ECF	120.9	183	11.28	95.41	3	9	Extended to 4.5 years
Seychelles	2014	_ _ A _ Y	14/11/2008	SBA	17.6	161	6.16	11	1	X	Not yet voting in UNGA
			23/12/2009	EFF	26.4	242	5.72	26.4	4	X	
			04/06/2014	EFF	11.45	105	3.27	6.54	3	6	This is first loan after first vote
Sierra Leone	2014	**A A A A Y**	**01/07/2010**	**ECF**	**31.11**	**30**	**7**	**22.2**	**3**	**X**	No change after vote
			21/10/2013	ECF	186.66	180	34.8	137.38	3	14	
Togo	2008	A A Y Y Y	21/04/2008	ECF	95.41	130	31.2	95.41	3.25	32	
Voting shift to abstention											
Afghanistan	2012	N N A A N	15/11/2011	ECF	85	52	12	24	3	13	
Comoros	2010	N N A A A	21/09/2009	PRGF	13.57	152	4.23	13.57	4.25	15	
Jordan	2008	**N A A A A**	**03/08/2012**	**SBA**	**1364**	**800**	**255.7**	**1364**	**3**	**X**	Loan 4 years after vote change
Mauritania	2008	N A A N A	**15/3/2010**	**ECF**	**77.28**	**120**	**11.04**	**77.28**	**3.25**	**X**	Loan 2 years after change
Solomon Is.	2010	A N A A A	02/06/2010	SCF	12.48	120	3.2	12.48	1.5	6	
			07/12/2011	SCF	5.2	50	0	0	1	X	Vote change taken place
			10/12/2012	ECF	10.4	10	0.149	0.74	3	X	Vote change taken place

Key to loan types: SBA: Standby Arrangement, ECF: Extended Credit Facility, PRGF: Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility, SCF: Standby Credit Facility, EFF: Extended Fund Facility
Voting Pattern for 2007, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014.: [_] signifies no vote recorded.