

Looking Backwards to Go Forwards? Europe at a Crossroads

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The EU as an Interorganisational Influencer?

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Abstract

This paper seeks to address the EU’s role as an interorganisational influencer on other regional organisations. More specifically, it examines and assesses the extent to which the EU has been able to shape the institutional designs, policies and tools of the African Union (AU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the security domain. Both organisations are regional of nature, possess specific tasks and responsibilities which include the realm of security, and maintain interorganisational relations with the EU. While the EU has been heavily influenced by international organisations and international institutions, such as the United Nations, NATO, and the Council of Europe, it also has the potential itself to exert interorganisational influence. This potential can put the EU in different positions as interorganisational influencer. These positions vary from role model and to a limited influencer. The case examples of the AU and ASEAN will serve to illustrate the varying degree of the EU’s influence on international organisations.

INTRODUCTION

In September 2016, the EU’s High Representative Federica Mogherini announced that ‘we have to make Europe an even stronger regional and global player’ (Mogherini 2016). This illustrates the long-term objective of the European Union (EU) not only to become an international player, but also to further promote its own regional integration project and to influence organisations worldwide. With the introduction of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) in 1992, the EU has moved a step closer to this goal by extending its tools of external relations. While in its early stages, opponents such as the United States criticised the missing need for another security actor in Europe, with the Atlantic Alliance there is already a dominant military actor on the continent, supporters suggested to foster the EU’s global role through its foreign, security and defence policy (cf. Larrabee 2004). Due to its network and relations with other organisations,

the EU has already been labelled an ‘interorganisational actor’ (Koops 2012b). This paper seeks to reflect on the interorganisational relations of the EU with other international organisations in order to assess its ability to promote its own model and to exert influence on its counterparts.

One way of becoming a stronger regional and international player is to maintain close cooperation with other international security organisations, to shape their institutional evolutions, policies and behaviour, and to maintain asymmetric dependence. Through its numerous bilateral agreements, the Union has established interorganisational relations with several international actors, including trade regimes and security alliances. With the introduction of the strategic partnership concept in the 2003 European Security Strategy, the EU emphasised the importance of inter-regional and inter-organisational relations, which paved the path for more formalisation of such relationships.

In its own development as a global actor, the EU has been influenced by existing international organisations and institutions, such as the United Nations, NATO, and the Council of Europe (Costa/Jørgensen 2012). Yet, it also possesses the potential to exert influence itself. Effective multilateralism, which was introduced in the 2003 European Security Strategy, plays an important role in the EU’s relations with external actors. It refers to the engagement in a multilateral framework, including the promotion of regional integration on a global level. Therefore, this paper seeks to address the issue of interorganisational interaction between the EU and key international security organisations. More specifically, it examines and attempts to assess how the EU is able to act as an interorganisational influencer towards the African Union (AU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). This empirical contribution builds on the findings from studies on the EU’s influence as a regional actor which was conceptualised, among others, by Lenz and Burilkov (2016). In addition, it applies resource dependency theory in combination with the theoretical framework of interorganisational interaction (Aldrich 1976, Biermann 2009, Gehring/Oberthür 2009, Koops 2012a, Pfeffer/Salancik 1978). This enables to analyse the interorganisational relations while putting an emphasis on the EU’s ability to exert influence in its external relations.

This analysis adds not only to the existing literature on the EU as an international actor but also to the literature on interorganisational relations in the area of security policy. The overall aim is to provide an empirical contribution which contributes to the case-study works of, for example, Jetschke and Murray (2012), Rein (2015) and Rüländ (2001). It seeks to analyse the dependency of international organisations on the EU in the area of peace and security, and to show how the EU uses this dependency to shape the institutional evolution, practices and

policies of its counterparts.

THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Resource Dependence Theory Meets Interorganisational Relations

Studies of the relations between international organisations in the same issue area have been conducted from different theoretical perspectives. These theoretical approaches vary from regionalism and norm diffusion to economics and business administration (see, for example, Cropper et al. 2008, Jetschke/Murray 2012, Jetschke 2017, Weyland 2008). This analysis takes a particular avenue by applying two approaches, which, in combination, have so far received little attraction by scholars. It aims to create a linkage between resource dependence theory and the framework of interorganisational interaction based on the works by Gehring and Oberthür (2004, 2009; also see Gehring/Faude 2014) as well as Biermann and Harsch (2017; also see Biermann 2009).

According to scholars of resource dependence theory, the core assumption is that international organisations are embedded in their networks and environments. They require resources for their survival and to achieve their goals. Resources are furthermore important to maintain their organisational autonomy. However, resources are scarce and organisations depend on internal as well as external sources to obtain them. This struggle for resources can lead to either interorganisational cooperation or competition (Aldrich 1976, Aldrich/Pfeffer 1976). Such resources can be either material and tangible or immaterial and symbolic. While material resources consist of raw materials, capital, facilities, knowledge and human resources, symbolic resources include mutual support, trust, gratitude, and respect as well as power and legitimacy (Biermann/Harsch 2017: 138, Blau 1964: 94). Due to the specialisation and lack of self-sufficient character, international organisations need to enter exchanges and transactions with other to acquire these vital resources for their survival. These exchanges lead to reciprocal interactions within their networks and environments as well as to external interdependencies on organisations as resource suppliers (Aldrich 1976, Biermann/Harsch 2017, Levine/White 1961).

Resource dependence theory argues that organisations with a similar structure are more likely to cooperate and to exchange material and symbolic resources (Levine/White 1961). Deriving from this, the theoretical framework of interorganisational interaction adds to resource

dependence theory by looking at the relationship between international organisations in a particular network. Interorganisational interaction is generally defined as ‘links, relationships and modes of interaction between two or more international organisations (Koops 2012a: 72). These links and interactions between organisations grow with the emergence of increasing domain similarities and overlapping tasks, responsibilities and issue areas, as well as when interests, norms and rules become homogenous. In addition, interorganisational interaction occurs ‘if one institution (the source institution) affects the development or performance of another institution (the target institution)’ (Gehring/Oberthür 2009: 127).

Interorganisational interaction it can lead to organisational adaptation and change. Resource dependence theory and interorganisational interaction meet at the crossroad of the relevance of external determinants and factors on international organisations. Both theoretical perspectives acknowledge that external factors, such as material resources but also the existence and activities of another organisation, have an influence on organisational behaviour, practices and structures (Hillman et al. 2009, Gehring/Oberthür 2009). This can either occur deliberately and actively, i.e. the existing practices and structures of one organisation are perceived as beneficial and useful for the target organisation, or passively, i.e. the source organisation imposes its model on the target organisation, which is likely to occur through coercive measures or conditionality. In this regard, active change, and thus influence from the source, includes an organisation’s external policies towards third actors, which includes instruments such as financial support, technical assistance and political dialogue. For example, being actively engaged in shaping organisations’ institutional designs characterises the EU as an ‘identity-maker’ (Grugel 2004: 621 cited in Lenz/Burilkov 2016: 5). Passive change refers to institutional learning, i.e. other organisations aim to imitate the success of another regional integration project. In this process of emulation, organisations model their institutions, for instance, on the EU (Lenz/Burilkov 2016: 5). Yet, it is important to note that organisations are also able to receive vital resources from alternative sources, meaning other institutions and organisations in the network, which can decrease the dependence on a single actor (Blau 1964, Levine/White 1961).

Each organisation has a specific position within the network which allows them to bargain with others over resources and to secure access to them. However, in some cases, the exchanged material and symbolic resources are not of equal importance and size. Consequently, an asymmetric interaction occurs which leads to imbalanced dependence of the organisations, and hence, interorganisational interaction can sometimes be a zero-sum gain. In such cases of asymmetry and imbalanced dependence, the advantaged organisation can yield control over

the disadvantaged organisation, and thus provides greater autonomy (Biermann/Harsch 2017, Pfeffer/Salancik 1978).

Measuring Dependencies among International Organisations

In order to examine the level of dependence of the AU and of ASEAN on the European Union, it is important to take a closer look at their interorganisational relations on different dimensions. In this section, channels of influence are developed according to the resource dependence of the respective organisations. Deriving from both resource dependence theory and the framework of interorganisational interaction, these channels include: (1) functional overlap, (2) formalisation, (3) types of interactions, (4) frequency of interaction, (5) historical links and (6) financial assistance. Functional overlap is the number of policy areas and domains where both organisations are active. Formalisation refers to the type of declaration and official documents between the actors. Types of interactions consequently includes these declarations as well as the types of meetings, working groups and any other kind of interaction. In this regard, the frequency of interactions counts the number of meetings, declarations and other types of interaction per year. Historical links indicates the connection that the EU and its member states possess with individual states or the region. Lastly, financial assistance is based on the amount of financial support from the EU to the respective organisation.

Deducing from the theoretical framework and with regards to the channels of influence to measure dependency, the EU can be conceptualised in two ways vis-à-vis other international organisations. The notion of EU as *role model* implies that the European Union serves as a template regional security organisation and thus proactively engages in promoting this model. This occurs through external pressures and factors, for example, when the EU deliberately engages in the institutional build-up and evolution of the target organisation. This comes either in the form financial support, technical assistance or expertise (Bilal 2007, Jetschke 2017). If the EU serves as a role model for another organisation, a very high level of compatibility between the two is expected due to the similarity of structures, procedures, practices and norms. This ultimately makes cooperation more likely and successful cooperation is expected.

The concept of the EU as *limited influencer* in interorganisational relations draws on findings from the diffusion literature, according to which ‘members from regional organisations hardly ever borrow from a single organisation’ (Jetschke 2017: 174). In this case, the target organisation keeps a high level of organisational autonomy because the source organisation only has an effect on the practices, policies and structures to a certain degree, which indicates

a limited success of organisational influence. It is generally argued that international organisations are eager to maintain some organisational autonomy (cf. Biermann/Harsch 2017), and in this sense, both the source and target organisation have almost equal levels of autonomy.

A comparison of two cases will be made in the following sections, which are derived from the conceptualisation of the EU as interorganisational influencer. These two cases are based on relevant international security organisations with which the EU maintains long-term relations. The first case is the EU's relationship with the African Union and the second case is the EU's relationship with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Both organisations are considered to be not only security organisations, but also regional organisations, whose design and structures have evolved over the past decades and who have maintained – more or less – close cooperation with the EU (Jetschke 2017, Rein 2015). By examining the EU-AU and EU-ASEAN relationships, the overall objective is to investigate how the EU is able to shape the institutional designs, practices and structures of these organisations. It is argued that the EU is able to do so, however, in varying degrees.

ANALYSING THE EU AS AN INTERORGANISATIONAL INFLUENCER

EU-AU relations: The EU as a role model?

The African Union originates in the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), which was established in 1963 during a period of decolonisation on the African continent, and has developed since the AU has replaced it in 2002. The OAU's main objectives were support for decolonisation, promoting unity and solidarity among its signatories, maintaining sovereignty of its member states, and promoting development and cooperation on the African continent as well as with international actors, mostly, the United Nations (AU 2017). Due to the OAU's ineffectiveness and its inability to meet its objectives, the AU was created with the desire to achieve greater unity and as a regional organisation that seeks to become more like the successful counterpart on the European continent. The Constitutive Act, which was adopted in 2000 and came into force in 2001, represents the organisation's legal framework. It was especially inspired by the European Union's regional integration and peace project (Rein 2015). Generally, the AU has its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and it has currently 54 member states, including Morocco which has regained accession to the organisation.

When analysing the relationship between the African Union and the European Union, the dimensions to measure resource dependence can be applied, which help to identify the EU's potential to trigger change. The EU's origin is rooted in economic cooperation in order to avoid another war of the outreach of the Second World War. Also the AU seeks to maintain peace, security, stability and prosperity among its members, and its main motto is to create 'an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena' (AU 2017). In order to achieve this vision, the AU focuses on regional conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution in its actions and policies (AU 2017, Haynes 2011). Subsequently, both organisations have a functional overlap in numerous policy domains, which include the areas of agriculture; trade and economic affairs; political dialogue and integration, i.e. the promotion of democracy, good governance, rule of law and human rights; infrastructure, traffic and energy; migration; civil society and social affairs; and peace and security, including cooperation on maritime security (AU 2017, EU 2017). Based on the current Plan of Action on their future cooperation, this interorganisational relationship covers the issue areas of (1) peace and security, (2) democracy, good governance and human rights, (3) human development, (4) sustainable and inclusive development and growth and continental integration, and (5) global and emerging issues (Africa-EU Partnership 2014a, 2014b; Rein 2015).

Since the establishment of their relations, these have become moderately formalised. This means that both organisations have passed several declarations. Currently, their partnership follows the agreements of the Cotonou Agreement, but is primarily carried out through the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and guided by the Roadmap 2014-2017. However, it is not legally binding according to the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which excludes declarations and agreements between international organisations (UN 1969: Article 1). Effective multilateralism and maintaining bilateral relations, and more specifically strategic partnerships, are among the main objectives of the EU as pointed out in the 2003 European Security Strategy and reaffirmed in the 2016 EU Global Strategy. Yet, it has been criticised that it still cannot be labelled as a fully strategic partnership due to the asymmetries and imbalances of power, resources and strategies (Peen Rodt/Martyns Okeke 2013).

From the beginning, the AU and the EU have worked together through different types of interaction on various levels of frequency. The Africa-EU Summits take place every three years alternating between an African and a European host country. Annual college-to-college meetings take place between the African Commission and European Commission, which is so far unique in interorganisational relations. In addition, ministerial meetings and exchanges as

well as between the liaison officers and the respective organisation occur in regular frequency and more often in urgent matters, such as when a crisis is emerging. According to an EU official, these interactions are fruitful and useful for their partnership, but interaction is most effective when taking place informally¹. Through these interactions and exchanges, the EU is able to exert influence, for example in the peace and security domain. When the AU plans to conduct a peace support operation, it seeks advice from the EU experts (cf. Rein 2015). During the planning phase, a proposal for an operation is issued from the AU to the EU in order to seek advice as well as to request financial support. As stated by an EU official², in some cases the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) has actually been drafted by EU security experts to the AU. Thereby, direct change takes place by applying EU standards, principles, practices and rules for conducting peace operations. Such standards include, for instance, the conduct of cross-border instead of national operations. However, after the planning phase and the drafting of the CONOPS, the EU is not able to shape the strategy and conduct phases. Since EU funding is essential for the conduct of AU operations, African officials know the EU's rules and therefore are willing to follow these standards and conditions in order to receive the funding. European states always had relations with African states based on their colonial past, and therefore Africa had mattered for Europe since the beginning of its integration project (Peen Rodt/Martyns Okeke 2013, Rein 2015). Therefore, a strong historical linkages can be recorded. Despite the desire to disconnect from the former colonial powers in Europe, some states remain closely linked to their former colonies. Above all, this is the case of France and its former colonies. France keeps a special interest in Africa, such as in the Sahel region. This often explains France's interest in and motivation for conducting EU-led operations under CSDP in Africa. For example, it specifically promoted such efforts in Mali and Chad/Niger (Vallin 2015). In addition, due to these historical links, the EU sees a 'moral obligation' in supporting peace and security efforts of the AU³. This draws onto their historical link but also on the EU's normative principles as well as on its self-interest in maintain peace, security and stability on the European continent which is linked to the security situation on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea.

Lastly, the European Union has supported the AU financially through two main programmes, the Pan-African Programme and the African Peace Facility (APF). For example, it has helped to set up the AU's instrument to engage in peace support operations through the African Peace

¹ Interview with EU official in Brussels, 19 April 2017.

² Interview with EU official in Brussels, 28 April 2017.

³ Interview with EU official in Brussels, 19 April 2017.

Facility. For the period 2014-2016, the overall financial support through the APF amounts to EUR 1051 million, and since its establishment in 2004, the EU has contributed financially to AU-led peace support operations amounting to EUR 1.6 billion (Africa-EU Partnership 2017). In this regard, the EU also has the ability to shape the AU's developments in regard to peace and security by financially supporting programmes and tools. While this may lead to positive effects concerning African peace support operations, it also limits the AU's ownership of the APSA because through this financial assistance, a 'substantial donor dependence' has been created (Peen Rodt/Martyns Okeke 2013: 221).

In addition, the AU's dependence on the EU can lead to the argument that the EU can be regarded as a role model. The reasons for this are grounded in the EU's financial support and technical assistance on the one hand, and in the compatibility of their organisational structures on the other hand. The EU's project of regional integration is 'widely perceived as not just an example, but a model for regional economic integration' (Bilal 2007: 3). Due to the success of economic growth, maintaining peace and promoting good governance on the European continent, other regional and international organisations strived to model themselves on the EU. The AU can be seen as such example. The organisational structure of the AU evinces a high degree of similarity to the EU's. The European Council and the AU Assembly is where the heads of state and governments meet; the Council of the EU and the Executive Council are the decision-making bodies; the executive branch are the European Commission and the AU Commission; both have a parliament, the European Parliament and the Pan-African Parliament respectively, as well as a judiciary body, the Court of Justice of the EU and the Court of Justice of the AU; and both organisations have in addition an Economic and Social Committee (EU) and Economic, Social and Cultural Council (AU) respectively (AU 2017, Haynes 2011, Kingah/Van Langenhove 2012). As regards foreign and security policies, both the EU and the AU have established bodies within their institutions that deal with these matters. In particular the cooperation between the EU's Political and Security Committee (EU PSC) and the AU's Peace and Security Council (AU PSC) is of great importance. Additional similarities between the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy and the AU's Common African Defence and Security Policy can be identified. Both policies provide their organisations the necessary framework and instruments to become responsible for and deal with their own continental affairs (cf. Touray 2005). The main difference between the EU/CSDP and the AU/CADSP is that the latter is more open and flexible in launching different types of peace operations because

it is not institutionally limited like the EU, which requires a decision in the PSC to launch an operation⁴.

Overall, the relationship between the EU and the AU remain close and unique concerning their historical links, the interests in each other's regional integration projects, and the similarities of their institutional designs, as well as because of the exchange of resource. As it has been illustrated in the analysis, it can be argued that the EU has the ability and the means to heavily influence the practices, processes and rules of the AU. Although the member states of the AU initially sought to disconnect from their colonial powers in Europe, and thereby hoped to establish an equal partnership, the relationship between the EU and the AU has nevertheless become 'symptomatic of traditional donor-recipient relations' (Peen Rodt/Martyns Okeke 2013: 212). The process of establishing interregional and inter-organisational relations is a process dominated by the EU in which is demonstrates its capability to shape other international organisations in the area of peace and security.

EU-ASEAN relations: The EU as a limited influencer?

Like the European Union and other international and regional organisations, ASEAN is a product of the Cold War. It was established in 1967 by its five founding member states – Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand – and over the course of time, it was enlarged by another five states. In the ASEAN Declaration the founding principles are enshrined legally. These principles set out the main objectives, which include economic growth, regional stability, mutual respect, and the preservation of the independence and the sovereignty of its member states (ASEAN 1967). The genesis of creating a regional organisation in Southeast Asia originates from the security context in Asia after the end of the Second World War. The member states of ASEAN sought to create a counterbalance to the several actors in the region, more specifically between the United States and the Soviet Union as well as between China and Japan (Beeson 2008).

Applying the dimensions to measure resource dependence to the EU-ASEAN relationship, convergence between the two as well as similarities and differences can be identified. As outlined above, the EU covers a wide range of activities and topics. ASEAN deals with similar issues. Both organisations have a high degree of functional overlap because they both cover policy areas such as trade and economic affairs; environment and sustainability; political

⁴ Interview with EU official in Brussels, 28 April 2017.

dialogue and integration, including the promotion of democracy, good governance, rule of law and human rights; transport, infrastructure and communications; health and labour standards; social-cultural issues including education, culture, arts and sports; and peace, security and defence (ASEAN 2017, EU 2017). Moreover, since both organisations were established because of similar reasons, i.e. maintaining peace among states in the region through strengthened trade relations, it is claimed that they share the ‘same DNA’ (EEAS 2007: 1). In this regard, they share a similar identity as well as similar ambitions. Both organisations also have an overlap in tasks, interests, norms and rules. For example, they act as trading blocs, have common interests in trade, security and socio-cultural issues, and they have created intersections in regard to regulatory jurisdiction as well as rules, e.g. decision-making rules (Novotny/Portela 2012). Accordingly, the EU-ASEAN relationship is based along three pillars – political and security cooperation, economic cooperation and socio-cultural cooperation (EEAS 2007) – which reflect the domain similarity of both organisations.

In 2017, the EU and ASEAN celebrate their 40th anniversary. Yet, their relationship is not highly formalised. Relations began in 1972 and were formalised on the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in July 1977, and subsequently, the so-called Dialogue Relations were established through several agreements, such as the EEC-ASEAN Cooperation Agreement in 1980 and the EU-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership in 2007. Additional agreements between the two organisations are the 2007 Joint Declaration of the ASEAN-EU Commemorative Summit, celebrating thirty years of their interorganisational relations (ASEAN 2012, EEAS 2016a). Similar to the EU-AU relationship, these agreements and declarations are not legally binding under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (UN 1969: Article 1).

Although ASEAN developed its own institutional designs, which were not modelled on the EU’s structure unlike the AU’s, the two have a certain degree of institutional compatibility as each body finds a respective counterpart. While the EU’s military structures and institutional bodies were structured on the sophisticated ones of NATO, and thus have become more formalised, ASEAN’s security structures can be characterised as less formal, thereby reflecting its overall loose legal-institutional structure (Rees 2010). Since the mid-1990s, a dialogue among members about security cooperation was taking place, and with the enforcement of the 2007 ASEAN Charter, institutions were eventually developed. These include the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) which then adopted the APSC Blueprint. Both the APSC and the Blueprint sets out additional principles, such as the nature of a rules-based community and the organisation’s shared responsibility for comprehensive security, which further aims to become engaged in conflict resolution and conflict management as well as in

the promotion of human rights (ASEAN 2009). In contrast to the EU however, which has strengthened its capabilities and shaped its international role as security provider through its numerous civilian mission and the deployment of troops under the framework of its CSDP, ASEAN has so far not been able to distinguish itself as a genuine security actor on the international stage. While the EU attempts to be pro-active in foreign affairs as well as security and defence matters, ASEAN's approach is characterised by 'quiet diplomacy, dialogue and discussion' (Rees 2010: 404). However, both the EU and ASEAN share similar traditional as well as non-traditional security threats. These include issues such as instability in its neighbourhood, terrorism, illegal trade, and piracy (Hofmeister/Rueppel 2014, Rees 2010). Within their interorganisational relations, three main mechanisms have been created – EU-ASEAN Joint Cooperation Committee, EU-ASEAN Senior Officials Meeting and EU-ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting – and the Ministerial Meetings set the overall main channel of cooperation. All three mechanisms deal with exchanges and communication between the EU and ASEAN. Yet, their relationship is at ministerial level and bodies on each side look at the relationship 'through their own prisms' (Oerstroem Moeller 2007: 470). Hence, there is an evident lack of priority and therefore, the EU does not classify it as a potential for being labelled as a strategic partnership, because it is not a fully-fledged interorganisational relationship at all levels (Oerstroem Moeller 2007: 469).

Exchanges at the ministerial level, i.e. Ministerial Meetings, take place on a rather irregular basis, but usually every one or two years. Regular exchanges between, for example, the EU Political and Security Committee and the APSC, occur both formally and informally (cf. Khandekar 2014, Oerstroem Moeller 2007). In addition, top-level politicians of the EU regularly visit the ASEAN headquarters in Jakarta, Indonesia. For example, the EU High Representative has attended the ASEAN Forum Ministerial Meetings since 2012 and also the Shangri La Dialogue, and the Chairman of the EU Military Committee visited his counterpart for meetings. At these meetings, important security issues are not only discussed, but the EU has also organised trainings and dialogues on specific security concerns, such as the High Level Dialogues on Maritime Security (EEAS 2016b). With regards to these exchanges and meetings, the EU is able to exert influence in two dimensions. First, at EU-ASEAN summits the EU has the ability to set the agenda according to its own interests and needs in the region. Second, the EU is able to design trainings, meetings and dialogues with ASEAN according to its own understandings and perceptions as well as based on its own standards (Novotny/Portela 2012, Oerstroem Moeller 2007).

In a similar vein to EU-Africa relations, the EU member states and the member states of

ASEAN have a shared colonial past. The majority of ASEAN members were at some point in time colonised by a European state. Above all, the UK as a former colonial power views the region as crucial for regional and international security (cf. Novotny/Portela 2012). It still maintains close relations with some of its former colonies, which include Brunei, Burma/Myanmar, Malaysia and Singapore. However, the UK's relations with some of its former colonies is rather defined and shaped through other forums and platforms, such as the Commonwealth of Nations, than through EU-ASEAN relations.

In addition to the EU's technical assistance and trainings by experts, it is actively engaged in influencing ASEAN through financial support. In the current budget cycle (2014-2020), ASEAN receives EUR 170 million from the EU to support integration projects, which include projects and programmes on security cooperation in the region (EU 2015). In addition, the Union provides assistance and expertise to ASEAN to improve internal cooperation in the areas of information sharing and capacity building (Rees 2010). In comparison to the EU-AU relationship and the EU's financial support in this context, however, its funding for ASEAN's projects seem rather small.

Despite these channels of influence, the EU has only a limited capacity to shape ASEAN's policies, practices and institutional design. While the two organisations have common security threats, such as migration, piracy, terrorism and emerging conflicts in the near neighbourhood (Rees 2010), the EU is restricted in actually influencing ASEAN's approach by providing expertise and technical assistance. For example, in the area of maritime security and the perceived security threat by ongoing piracy, the EU could be assumed to act as a role model for ASEAN. Both organisations have great interests in fighting piracy to secure trade routes. While the EU is already active in fighting piracy off the Somali coast and in the Gulf of Aden through EUNAVFOR Operation Atalanta, ASEAN itself still struggles to actively engage in anti-piracy efforts in the Malacca Strait. Though, the navies of ASEAN member states are to conduct a joint operation (cf. The Economist 2015). The major problem is that both organisations share the same obstacle: internal coherence and conflicts of interests. The EU is nevertheless able to conduct a successful anti-piracy operation with joint international efforts. It is able to overcome its problems due to its sophisticated and well-developed institutional structures through which it has adopted policies to tackle these issues. ASEAN, on the other hand, faces greater diversity among its members and less institutionalised structures. Responding collectively to security issues therefore has become complex and difficult (Rees 2010). In this regard, the EU has attempted to contribute to the institutional design of ASEAN with the help of its resources, but it faces numerous challenges. Among these challenges are

the rise of China and India on the Asian continent as well as the growing interests in the region by the United States (Murray 2015). Vice versa, however, ASEAN and its member states have not been able to successfully shape the design and policy direction of the EU. In fact, the relationship is still considered asymmetric due to the high financial support by the EU and the expertise it has to offer (Rüland 2001).

In addition to the diverging responses to security threats, it has become evident that there is a lack of political will to push for stronger interorganisational relations between ASEAN and the EU plays an important role and affects the limited exchange of expertise and assistance (Murray 2015, Oerstroem Moeller 2007). In this context, Oerstroem Moeller points out that ‘the main problem seems to be reluctance on the EU’s part to move the EU-ASEAN relationship into the category of a strategic partnerships (2007: 469). In contrast to EU-AU relations, which is now considered as a strategic partnership, yet a questionable one (cf. Peen Rodt/Martyns Okeke 2013), the EU-ASEAN relationship is still a big step away from a strategic one. This illustrates that the European Union sets priorities differently in terms of maintaining its relationships with other international organisations.

Overall, the EU-ASEAN relationship remains interesting and vital for the EU in order to pursue its objectives in Southeast Asia. In security terms, however, the EU is limited to shape the policies and practices of its counterpart. This is not only due to the lack of attention to security cooperation, but also due to the different understandings and perceptions of threats as well as the diverging institutional capabilities and political coherence among the members, which makes it difficult for the EU to project its institutional design, policies and practices towards ASEAN. This therefore indicates that the EU is limited in its ability to act as an organisational influencer equally among international organisations in all issue areas.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this paper was the comparative analysis of the resource dependence of the African Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on the European Union. It further aimed to explore how the EU uses this dependency to shape the institutional evolution, practices and policies of other international organisations through the prism of resource dependence theory in combination with the theoretical framework of interorganisational interaction. The EU is often defined as an international actor on the world stage with influential powers and has been characterised as soft power, economic power, civilian power, or

normative power (see Sjørusen 2006). In this regard, it often desires to trigger and contribute to transformations in other regional and international organisations so that it can export its own policies, practices and institutions as well as its norms and values. Therefore, some scholars have labelled the EU as an ‘organisational carrier’ and ‘scriptwriter’, that promotes its own organisational structure and practices to other international organisations (Murray 2015: 239). With the help of a case study research this paper examined the EU’s actual ability to act as interorganisational influencer.

Effective multilateralism and strategic partnerships constitute the core of the EU’s external relations. On its route towards profiling itself as a truly global actor, it seeks to exert influence on third countries as well as on international and regional organisations. Drawing on the theoretical and analytical framework, six channels of influence have been developed: functional overlap, formalisation, types of interactions, frequency of interaction, historical links and financial contributions. Based on these, the EU’s role as influencer can be distinguished between two positions. On the one hand, the EU can serve as a role model for organisations and, on the other hand, as limited influencer. While the EU maintains a unique relationship with the African Union, it has supported it financially as well as with its expertise through regular interactions at the formal and informal level. The EU tries to deliberately influence the EU because of its own security threats as well as security interests in the region. Crises in Africa have direct impacts on the EU’s security and therefore it seeks to maintain a voice in the African Peace and Security Architecture. But with the increased African ownership the EU’s influence will have its limits in the future. In sum, the findings of this case study imply that the EU has the capability to act as a role model when the relationship is asymmetric due to its high amount of financial support and expertise provided to the creation of the organisation. In the case of EU-ASEAN relations, the support is also asymmetrical, but due to the diverging perceptions of security threats as well as the internal differences among the member states, the EU is restricted in influencing ASEAN’s security architecture. In addition, a lack of attention to security cooperation in their relations and reluctance to move this interorganisational relationship a step further have been noted as limiting factors.

These findings suggest that the European Union maintains multifaceted relations with international organisations through its effective multilateralism approach, which eventually opposes the EU’s previous approach of ‘one-size-fits-all’. The ability of the EU to shape the policies, practices and institutional designs of its counterparts depends primarily on its will to interact with these actors as well as on their reciprocity, i.e. what they have to offer. While functional overlaps, historical links and the types of interactions are important to consider for

this analysis, the frequency of these interactions, formalisation and the financial support from the EU play a more important role and enable it to make use of its resources and its dominant position within the network.

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