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The EU as an Interorganizational Influencer?

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This article seeks to address the European Union's (EU's) role as an interorganizational influencer vis-a-vis regional organizations. More specifically, it examines and assesses the extent to which the EU has been able to shape the institutional designs, policies and practices of the African Union (AU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the security domain. Both organizations are regional of nature, possess specific tasks and responsibilities which include the realm of security, and maintain interorganizational relations with the EU. While the EU has been heavily influenced by international organizations and international institutions, it also has the potential itself to exert interorganizational influence. This potential can put the EU in different positions as interorganizational influencer. These positions vary from role model and to a limited influencer. It is argued that in the early stages of the EU's interorganizational relations, its ability to shape the evolution of its counterparts is greater than once the relationships have been strengthened because of the EU's tools and resources. The case examples of the AU and ASEAN will serve to illustrate the varying degree of the EU's influence on international organizations.

1. INTRODUCTION

The long-term objective of the European Union (EU) is to become an international and to further promote its own regional integration project and to influence regions and organizations worldwide¹. 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 criticized 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. Due to its network and relations with other organizations, the EU has already been labelled as an 'interorganizational actor'². This article seeks to reflect on the interorganizational relations of the EU with other international organizations 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 organizations, to shape their institutional evolutions,

¹ Lavenex, S.& Schimmelfennig, F., EU rules beyond EU borders: theorising external governance in European politics, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 16(6): 791-812 (2009).

² Koops, J. A., Assessing the European Union as an Interorganisational Actor: From Policy-Oriented Analysis to Theory-Guided Research, Paper presented at GREEN Scientific Workshop, IES VUB, 18-19 June (2012).

policies and behaviour, and to maintain asymmetric interdependence. Through its numerous bilateral agreements, the Union has established interorganizational relations with several international actors, including trade regimes and security alliances such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In the 2003 European Security Strategy, the EU introduced two new concepts: strategic partnerships and multilateral effectiveness. With the strategic partnership concept, it emphasizes the importance of interregional and interorganizational relations, which pave the path for more formalization of such relationships³.

In its own development as a global actor, the EU has been influenced by existing international organizations and institutions, such as the United Nations, NATO, and the Council of Europe⁴. Yet, it also possesses the potential to exert influence itself. Effective multilateralism plays another 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 level⁵. Therefore, this paper seeks to address the issue of interorganizational interaction between the EU and key international security organizations. More specifically, it examines and attempts to assess how the EU is able to act as an interorganizational influencer towards the African Union (AU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Both are considered to be international organizations that carry out functions of collective security governance including the integration of foreign and security policies as well as the development of tools and instruments in the area of peace and security⁶. The EU, AU and ASEAN, furthermore, are faced with similar traditional and non-traditional threats, such as the instability in their neighbourhoods, piracy and maritime security, terrorism, organized crime, refugees, and economic and environmental security⁷. Sharing a similar threat perception assumes a higher functional overlap and similar responses to these threats. Yet, the responses of the AU and ASEAN to crisis and these security threats differ, and therefore, this article seeks to explore to what extent the EU has influenced the AU and ASEAN in responding to and dealing with these security threats.

This empirical contribution builds on the findings from studies on the EU's influence as a regional actor which was conceptualized, among others, by Lenz and Burilkov⁸. In addition, it applies

³ European Union, European Security Strategy – A Secure Europe in a Better World (2003).

⁴ Costa, O. & Jørgensen, K. E., The Influence of International Institutions on the EU: A Framework for Analysis, in Costa, O. & Jørgensen, K. E. (eds.) *The Influence of International Institutions on the EU: When Multilateralism hits Brussels* (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 1-22.

⁵ European Union, *supra* n.4.

⁶ Kirchner, E.J. & Dominguez, R., *The Security Governance of Regional Organizations* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011).

⁷ African Union Peace and Security, Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy (2012); European Union, European Security Strategy – Secure Europe in a Better World (2003); ASEAN, *The ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint* (Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat, 2009); European Union, *Shared Vision, Common Action: Stronger Europe – A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy* (2016).

⁸ Lenz, T. & Burilkov, A., *Institutional pioneers in world politics: Regional institution building and the influence*

resource dependency theory in combination with the theoretical framework of interorganizational interaction⁹. This enables to analyse the interorganizational relations while putting an emphasis on the EU's ability to exert influence in its external relations. It is argued that the potential for the EU to exert influence on the institutional developments and policies is greater in the earlier stages of interorganizational relations and that its counterparts move increasingly towards self-ownership with an emphasis on their autonomy.

This analysis adds not only to the existing literature on the EU as an international actor but also to the literature on interorganizational relations in the area of foreign and security policy. The overall aim is to provide an empirical analysis which contributes to the case-study works of, for example, Jetschke and Murray, Rein and Rüländ¹⁰. It seeks to analyse the dependency of international organizations on the EU in the area of peace and security, and to show whether the EU is able to successfully use its resources and the subsequent asymmetrical interdependence to shape the institutional evolution, practices and policies of its counterparts.

2. THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Resource Dependence Theory Meets Interorganizational Relations

Studies of the relations between international organizations in the same issue area have been conducted from different theoretical perspectives. These theoretical approaches vary from regionalism, norm diffusion and external governance to economics and business administration¹¹. This analysis takes a particular avenue by applying two approaches, which, in combination, have so far

of the European Union, *European Journal of International Relations*, 23(3), 654-680 (2017).

⁹ See among others, Aldrich, H. E., Resource Dependence and Interorganizational Relations: Local Employment Service Offices and Social Services Sector Organization, *Administration and Society*, 7(4): 419-454 (1976); Biermann, R., Interorganisationalism in Theory and Practice, *Studia Diplomatica: The Brussels Journal of International Relations*, 62(3): 7-12 (2009); Gehring, T. & Oberthür, S., The Causal Mechanisms of Interaction between International Institutions, *European Journal of International Relations*, 15: 1, 125-156 (2009); Koops, J. A., Inter-organisational approaches, in Jorgensen/Laatikainen (eds.) *Routledge Handbook on the EU and International Institutions* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), pp. 71-86; Pfeffer, J. & Salancik, G., *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

¹⁰ Jetschke, A. & Murray, P., Diffusing Regional Integration: The EU and Southeast Asia, *West European Politics*, 35(1): 174-191 (2012); Rein, C., The European Union and the African Union: A Strategic Partnership, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 20(4): 553-572 (2015); Rüländ, J., ASEAN and the European Union: A Bumpy Inter-Regional Relationship, Discussion Paper C95, Bonn: Center for European Integration Studies (2001).

¹¹ See, for example, Cropper, S. et al., *The Oxford Handbook of Inter-Organisational Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Jetschke & Murray, *supra* n.11; Jetschke, A., What Drives Institutional Reforms in Regional Organisations? Diffusion, Contextual Conditions, and the Modular Design of ASEAN, *Trans –Regional and –National Studies of Southeast Asia*, 5(1): 173–196 (2017); Lavenex & Schimmelpfening, *supra* n.2; Weyland, K., Toward a New Theory of Institutional Change, *World Politics*, 60(2): 281-314 (2008).

received little attraction by scholars. It aims to create a linkage between resource dependence theory and the framework of interorganizational interaction based on the works by Gehring and Oberthür¹² as well as Biermann and Harsch¹³.

According to scholars of resource dependence theory, the core assumption is that international organizations 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 organizational autonomy. However, resources are scarce and organizations depend on internal as well as external sources to obtain them. This struggle for resources can lead to either interorganizational cooperation or competition¹⁴. 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 legitimacy¹⁵. Due to the specialization and lack of self-sufficiency, international organizations need to enter exchanges and transactions with others 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 organizations as resource suppliers¹⁶.

Resource dependence theory further argues that organizations with a similar structure are more likely to cooperate and exchange material and symbolic resources. Deriving from this, the theoretical framework of interorganizational interaction adds to resource dependence theory by looking at the relationship between international organizations in a particular network. Interorganizational interaction is generally defined as 'links, relationships and modes of interaction between two or more international organizations'¹⁷. These links and interactions between organizations 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, interorganizational interaction occurs 'if one institution (the source institution) affects the development or performance of another institution (the target institution)¹⁸. This means that the source institution is able to influence, for example, the policy decisions and institutional settings of

¹² Gehring, T. & Oberthür, S., *supra* n.10; Gehring, T. & Faude, B., A Theory of Emerging Order Within International Complexes: How Competition Among Regulatory International Institutions leads to Institutional Adaptation and Division of Labour, *Review of International Organizations*, 9(4): 471-498 (2014).

¹³ Biermann, R. & Harsch, M., Resource Dependence Theory, in Biermann, R. 7 Koops, J. A. (eds.) *Palgrave Handbook of Inter-Organisational Relations in World Politics*, pp. 135-156 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

¹⁴ Aldrich, *supra* n.8; Aldrich, H. E. & Pfeffer, J., Environments of Organizations, *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2(1): 79-105 (1976).

¹⁵ Biermann & Harsch, *supra* n.14, at 138;

¹⁶ Aldrich, *supra* n.8; Biermann & Harsch, *supra* n.14; Levine, S. & White, P. E., Exchange as a Conceptual Framework for the Study of Interorganisational Relationships, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 5(4): 583-601 (1961).

¹⁷ Koops, *supra* n.10, at 72.

¹⁸ Gehring & Oberthür, *supra* n.10, at 127.

instruments of the target institution.

Interorganizational interaction can also lead to organizational adaptation and change. Resource dependence theory and interorganizational interaction meet at the crossroad of the relevance of external determinants and factors on international organizations. Both theoretical perspectives acknowledge that external factors, such as material resources but also the existence and activities of another organization, have an influence on organizational behaviour, practices and structures. This can either occur deliberately and actively, i.e. the existing practices and structures of one organization are perceived as beneficial and useful for the target organization, or passively, i.e. the source organization imposes its model on the target organization, which is likely to occur through coercive measures or conditionality. In this regard, active change, and thus influence from the source, includes an organization's external policies towards third actors, which includes instruments such as financial support, technical assistance and political dialogue. The more interactions and exchanges occur, the more actively one organization can be involved in developing and shaping the target organization's policies, practices and structures. For example, the EU makes use of pressures on its counterparts through financial contributions and active institutional engagement. Being actively engaged in shaping organizations' institutional designs therefore characterizes the EU as an 'identity-maker'¹⁹. Passive change, i.e. passive influence, refers to institutional learning, i.e. other organizations aim to imitate the success of another regional integration project. In this process of emulation, organizations model their institutions, for instance, on the EU. Yet, it is important to note that organizations are also able to receive vital resources from alternative sources, meaning other institutions and organizations in the network, which can decrease the dependence on a single actor²⁰.

Each organization 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 organizations, and hence, interorganizational interaction can sometimes be a zero-sum gain. In such cases of asymmetry and imbalanced dependence, the advantaged organization can yield control over the disadvantaged organization, and thus provides greater autonomy²¹.

2.2 Measuring Dependencies among International Organizations

In order to examine the level of dependence of the AU and of ASEAN on the European Union, it is

¹⁹ Lenz & Burilkov, *supra* n.9, at 658.

²⁰ Levine & White, *supra* n.17.

²¹ Biermann & Harsch, *supra* n.14; Pfeffer & Salancik, *supra* n.10.

important to take a closer look at their interorganizational relations in different dimensions. This allows to investigate whether and to what extent the EU is able to exert influence on the policies and practices of the AU and ASEAN in the area of peace and security. In this section, channels of influence are developed according to the dependence of the respective organizations. Deriving from both resource dependence theory and the framework of interorganizational interaction these channels include: (1) functional overlap and institutional compatibility, (2) types and frequency of interaction, (3) financial assistance, and (4) transfer of knowledge. Functional overlap is the number of policy areas and domains where both organizations are active. It is assumed that the greater the overlap the more likely organizations exchange resources and cooperate²². Institutional compatibility refers to the institutional structures of organizations and the extent to which these overlap. Types of interactions include declarations and agreements as well as meetings, working groups, the existence of liaison officers and any other kind of interaction. In this regard, the frequency of interactions refers to how often meetings, declarations and other types of interaction occur per year. Financial assistance is based on the amount of financial support from the source organization to the target organization. Providing financial means allows the source organization to set certain conditions on how to use these funds for the target organization. Lastly, the transfer of expertise indicates how, and to what extent, the target organizations rely on the source organization's experience and knowledge on a certain issue or in a specific policy area.

Deducing from the theoretical framework and with regards to the channels of influence to measure dependency, the EU can be conceptualized as an influencer in two ways vis-à-vis other international organizations. Generally, the EU exerts influence actively and passively. It applies pressures on its counterparts through financial assistance and incentives as well as conditionality on the one hand, and it provides institutional structures and thereby expresses its institutional authority on the other hand. The notion of EU as *role model* implies that the European Union serves as a template regional security organization 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 organization. This comes either in the form financial support, technical assistance or expertise²³. If the EU serves as a role model for another organization, 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.

²² Biermann & Harsch, *supra* n.10; Gehring & Oberthür, *supra* n. 10.

²³ Bilal, S., Is the EU a Model of Regional Integration? Risks and challenges, Briefing for ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Political Affairs (ECDPM, Brussels, 13 September 2007); Jetschke, *supra* n.12; Lenz & Burilkov, *supra* n.9.

The concept of the EU as *limited influencer* in interorganizational relations draws on findings from the diffusion literature, according to which ‘members from regional organizations hardly ever borrow from a single organization’²⁴. In this case, the target organization keeps a high level of organizational autonomy because the source organization only has an effect on the practices, policies and structures to a certain degree, which indicates a limited success of organizational influence. It is generally argued that international organizations are eager to maintain some organizational autonomy²⁵, and in this sense, both the source and target organization have almost equal levels of autonomy.

A comparison of two cases will be made in the following sections, which are derived from the conceptualization of the EU as interorganizational influencer. These two cases are based on relevant international security organizations 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 organizations are considered to be not only security organizations, but also regional organizations, whose design and structures have evolved over the past decades and who have maintained close cooperation with the EU²⁶. 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 organizations. It is argued that the EU is able to do so, however, in varying degrees.

3. ANALYSING THE EU AS AN INTERORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCER

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

The African Union originates in the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was established in 1963 during a period of decolonization on the African continent, and has developed since the AU has replaced it in 2002. The OAU’s main objectives were support for decolonization, 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 Nations²⁷. 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 organization that seeks to

²⁴ Jetschke, *supra* n.12, at 174.

²⁵ Biermann & Harsch, *supra* n.14.

²⁶ Rein, *supra* n.11.

²⁷ African Union, AU in a Nutshell, <https://www.au.int/web/en/au-nutshell> (06 April 2017).

become more like the successful counterpart on the European continent. It has its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and it has currently fifty-four member states, including Morocco which has regained accession to the organization. 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. Overall, the EU-AU relationship follows the arrangements of the 2000 Cotonou Agreement, and is carried out through the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, which is guided by the Roadmap 2014-2017²⁸.

The AU's Constitutive Act, which was adopted in 2000 and came into force in 2001, represents the organization's legal framework. Although member states sought to create their own institutions and to move away from European ownership, they were nevertheless inspired by the European Union's regional integration and peace project as well as by its institutional structure. The EU's project of regional integration is 'widely perceived as not just an example, but a model for regional economic integration'²⁹. Due to the success of economic growth, maintaining peace and promoting good governance on the European continent, other regional and international organizations strived to model themselves on the EU. The AU can be seen as such example. The organizational 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 organizations have in addition an Economic and Social Committee (EU) and Economic, Social and Cultural Council (AU) respectively³⁰. 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 CSDP and the AU's Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP) can be identified. Both policies provide their organizations the necessary framework and instruments to become responsible for and deal with

²⁸ Africa-EU Partnership, The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership: A Joint EU-Africa Strategy - Roadmap 2014-2017, http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/sites/default/files/documents/eas2007_joint_strategy_en.pdf (07 April 2017).

²⁹ Bilal, *supra* n.24, at 3.

³⁰ African Union, *supra* n.28; Haynes, J. et al., The European Union and the African Union, in Haynes, J. at al. (eds.), *World Politics: International Relations and Globalization in the 21st Century*, pp.296-317 (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011); Kingah, S. & Van Langenhove, L., Determinants of a regional organisation's role in peace and security: the African Union and the European Union compared, *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 19(2): 201-222 (2012).

their own continental affairs³¹. 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 operation.

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 strives 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'³². In order to achieve this vision, the AU focuses on regional conflict prevention, conflict management and conflict resolution in its actions and policies³³. Subsequently, both organizations 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 security³⁴. Based on the current Plan of Action on their future cooperation, this interorganizational 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 issues³⁵.

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 interorganizational relations. In addition, ministerial meetings and exchanges as well as between the liaison officers and the respective organization occur in regular frequency and more often in urgent matters, such as when a crisis is emerging. These interactions are fruitful and useful for their partnership, but interaction is most effective when taking place informally.

Over the past years, 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 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

³¹ Touray, O. A., *The Common African Defence and Security Policy*, *African Affairs*, 104(417): 635-656 (2005).

³² African Union, *supra* n.28.

³³ Haynes, *supra* n.31.

³⁴ African Union, *supra* n.26; European Union, *Topics of the European Union*, https://europa.eu/european-union/topics_en (29 April 2017).

³⁵ Africa-EU Partnership, *supra* n.29; Rein, *supra* n.11.

operations amounting to EUR 1.6 billion³⁶. 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 African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) because through this financial assistance, a 'substantial donor dependence' has been created³⁷. Yet, according to an EU official³⁸, the EU is 'a payer and not a player anymore'. Hence, in the early stages of funding African Peace Support Operations (PSOs) the EU was indeed able to vocalize its conditions, such as in terms of following international standards in procurement, but because of the increased funds from alternative sources, mostly from the UN, the AU moves towards self-ownership and autonomy.

When the AU plans to conduct a peace support operation, it not only needs external funds but it also seeks advice from EU expert. During the planning phase, a proposal for a peace support operation is issued from the AU to the EU in order to request advice alongside financial support. As stated by an EU official³⁹, in some cases the Concept of Operations (CONOPS) has actually been drafted by EU security experts on behalf of 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 financial means.

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 due to the exchange of resources. As it has been illustrated in the analysis, it can be argued that the EU would have the ability and the means to 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'⁴⁰. In addition, as stated by an EU official⁴¹, the EU sees a 'moral obligation' in supporting peace and security efforts of the AU. The process of establishing interregional and inter-

³⁶ Africa-EU Partnership, African Peace Facility, <http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/en/about-us/financing-partnership/apf> (15 June 2017).

³⁷ Peen Rodt, A. & Martyns Okeke, J., AU-EU "Strategic Partnership": Strengthening Policy Convergence and Regime Efficacy in the African Peace and Security Complex?, *African Security*, 6(3-4): 211-233, at 221 (2013).

³⁸ Interview with EU Official, European External Action Service, Brussels, 28 June 2017.

³⁹ Interview with EU Official, European External Action Service, Brussels, 28 April 2017.

⁴⁰ Peen Rodt & Martyns Okeke, *supra* n.38, at 212.

⁴¹ Interview with EU Official, European External Action Service, Brussels, 19 April 2017.

organizational relations is a process dominated by the EU in which it demonstrates its capability to shape other international organizations in the area of peace and security. But due to the increased alternative financial sources for African PSOs, the AU is able to move towards self-ownership and autonomy.

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

Like the European Union and other international and regional organizations, 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 states⁴². The genesis of creating a regional organization 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 Japan⁴³.

The EU covers a wide range of activities and policy areas, which are partially shared by ASEAN. Both organizations have a high degree of functional overlap because they both cover policy areas such as trade and economic affairs; environment and sustainability; political 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 defence⁴⁴. Moreover, since both organizations 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’⁴⁵. In this regard, they share a similar identity as well as similar ambitions. Both organizations 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

⁴² ASEAN, The ASEAN Declaration, signed on 8 August 1967, <http://asean.org/the-asean-declaration-bangkok-declaration-bangkok-8-august-1967> (12 April 2017).

⁴³ Beeson, M., *Institutions of the Asia Pacific: ASEAN, APEC and beyond* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

⁴⁴ ASEAN, About ASEAN, <http://asean.org/asean/about-asean> (12 April 2017).

⁴⁵ European External Action Service, EU-ASEAN: Natural Partners, http://eeas.europa.eu/archives/docs/asean/docs/eu_asean_natural_partners_en.pdf, pp.1-8, at 1 (27 May 2017).

regulatory jurisdiction as well as rules, e.g. decision-making rules⁴⁶. Accordingly, the EU-ASEAN relationship is based on three pillars – political and security cooperation, economic cooperation and socio-cultural cooperation – which reflect the domain similarity of both organizations.

Although ASEAN developed its own institutional design, 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 formalized, ASEAN's security structures can be characterized as less formal, thereby reflecting its overall loose legal-institutional structure⁴⁷. 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 organization'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 rights⁴⁸. 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 characterized by 'quiet diplomacy, dialogue and discussion'⁴⁹. 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 piracy⁵⁰.

Within their interorganizational 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'⁵¹. Hence, there is an evident lack of priority and therefore, the EU does not classify it as a

⁴⁶ Novotny, D. & Portela, C., *EU-ASEAN Relations in the 21st Century: Strategic Partnership in the Making* (Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁴⁷ Rees, N., *EU and ASEAN: Issues of regional security*, *International Politics*, 47(3-4): 402-418, at 403 (2010).

⁴⁸ ASEAN, *supra* n.8

⁴⁹ Rees, *supra* n.48, at 404.

⁵⁰ Hofmeister, W. & Rueppel, P., *Maritime Security and Piracy: Common Challenges and Responses from Europe and Asia* (Singapore: Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung and European Union, 2014).

⁵¹ Oerstroem Moeller, J., *ASEAN's Relations with the European Union: Obstacles and Opportunities*, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 29(3): 465-482, at 470 (2007).

potential for being labelled as a strategic partnership, because it is not a fully-fledged interorganizational relationship at all levels. 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 informally⁵². 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 organized trainings and dialogues on specific security concerns, such as the High Level Dialogues on Maritime Security⁵³.

Furthermore, the EU 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 region⁵⁴. In addition, the Union provides assistance and expertise to ASEAN to improve internal cooperation in the areas of information sharing and capacity building. In comparison to the EU-AU relationship and the EU's financial support in this context, however, its financial assistance for ASEAN's projects seem rather small.

With regards to both meetings and transfer of knowledge, 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 standards⁵⁵. However, there are limitations to these channels of exerting influence and making ASEAN dependent on the EU. While the two organizations have common security threats, such as migration, piracy, terrorism and emerging conflicts in the near neighbourhood, 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 organizations have great interests in fighting piracy to secure trade routes. 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

⁵² Ibid., at 469.

⁵³ European External Action Service, EU and ASEAN: Facts and Figures, https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/facts_and_figures.pdf (30 April 2017).

⁵⁴ European Union, EU proposes to scale up its partnership with ASEAN, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5000_en.htm (13 April 2017).

⁵⁵ See for example, Novotny & Portela, *supra* n.76; Oerstroem Moeller, *supra* n.52; Rees, *supra* n.48.

operation⁵⁶. The major problem is that both organizations 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 institutionalized structures. Responding collectively to security issues therefore has become complex and difficult. 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. 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 offer⁵⁷.

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 interorganizational relations between ASEAN and the EU plays an important role and affects the limited exchange of expertise and assistance. 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'⁵⁸. According to one EU official⁵⁹, ASEAN takes a 'cherry-picking approach' towards cooperation with the EU, which does not leave much room for the Union to act as a role model. Similarly, also the EU sets priorities differently in terms of maintaining its relationships with other international organizations.

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 organizational influencer equally among international organizations in the area of peace and security.

⁵⁶ The Economist, Pirates in South-East Asia: Malacca buccaneers, published 27 June 2015, <http://www.economist.com/news/asia/21656237-step-aside-somalia-south-east-asia-new-piracy-capital-world-malacca-buccaneers> (23 December 2016).

⁵⁷ Murray, P., Europe and the World: The Problem of the Fourth Wall in EU-ASEAN Norms Promotion, *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 23(2): 238-252 (2015); Rees, *supra* n.48; Rüländ, *supra* n.11.

⁵⁸ Oerstroem Moeller, *supra* n.52, at 469.

⁵⁹ Telephone Interview with EU Official, European External Action Service, Brussels, 23 June 2017.

4. CONCLUSION

This article sought to comparatively analyse the resource dependence of the African Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on the European Union. It further aimed at exploring how the EU uses this dependency to shape the institutional evolution, practices and policies of other international organizations through the prism of resource dependence theory in combination with the theoretical framework of interorganizational interaction. The EU is identified as an international actor on the world stage with influential powers and has been characterized as soft power, economic power, civilian power, or normative power⁶⁰. In this regard, it often desires to trigger and contribute to transformations in other regional and international organizations 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 'organizational carrier' and 'scriptwriter'⁶¹, which promotes its own organizational structures and practices to other international organizations. With the help of a case study research this paper examined the EU's ability to act as interorganizational 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 organizations. The EU has been conceptualized as an interorganisational influencer as it actively and passively influences the practices and policies of its counterparts through different channels. Drawing on the theoretical framework, four channels of influence have been developed: (1) functional overlap and institutional compatibility, (2) types and frequency of interaction, (3) financial assistance, and (4) transfer of knowledge. Generally, the EU provides financial incentives and engages actively on the development of institutions and instruments of its cooperation partners, through which it also enhances its own institutional authority. The EU's role as influencer can consequently be distinguished between two positions. On the one hand, the EU can serve as a role model for organizations 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 exchanges and interactions. The EU tries to deliberately influence the AU 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 ability to set conditions is restricted and will face further limits in the future. In sum, the findings of this case study imply that

⁶⁰ Sjørnsen, H., What kind of power? European foreign policy in perspective, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 13(2): 169-181 (2006).

⁶¹ Murray, *supra* n.58, at 239.

the EU has the capability to act as a role model in the early stages when the relationship is asymmetric due to its high amount of financial support and expertise provided to the institutional development of the organization. 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. ASEAN seeks to maintain high level of autonomy which allows it set conditions itself. In addition, a lack of attention to security cooperation in their relations and reluctance to move this interorganizational relationship a step further have been noted as limiting factors.

These findings suggest that the EU maintains multifaceted relations with international organizations 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. It is able to exert influence actively and passively, and through all channels of influence. While functional overlaps, institutional compatibility, and type and frequency of interactions are useful to consider, the financial support and transfer of knowledge from the EU play a more important role and enable it to make use of its resources and its dominant position.