The European Union as a Peace Building Entity

"If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner."[1]

One of the dilemmas for the European Union is always the question: geographical enlargement of the Union or deepening the policies of further integration and collaboration. Some might argue that you have to make a choice. Others believe that these two scenarios can be developed simultaneously. Croatia is the latest new EU member. What about Ukraine and other countries in the Eastern European region? Who is interested in joining the EU, politicians or civilians? Clearly, membership should be the result of democracy and democratic elections within the given countries. The EU can serve as a mediator, such as in Northern Ireland, and as for the latest agreement between Serbia and Kosovo, although under pressure.[2]

The question I focus on is: can the EU function as a peace building entity?

1. World War II was inevitable, when taking into consideration how World War I ended with the Treaty of Versailles in 1919,[3] which was composed primarily by Allied powers. In this treaty, Germany was treated as the sole perpetrator of the war and they lost a significant amount of land, including Alsace-Lorraine which went to France; Eupen and Malmedy went to Belgium; land taken from Germany and given to Poland; the German African colonies such as Burundi and Rwanda were given to Belgium.

2. The Treaty of Versailles was incredibly unjust. Reconciliation among parties who are considered unequal is impossible. The Treaty subsequently left the German people feeling defeated and hopeless. Adolf Hitler noticed this vulnerability, and promised a return to the greatness that once was Germany. Many Germans were susceptible to Hitler's rhetoric and tactics, allowing him to gain an immense amount of power, thus leading into the Second World War, after which Germany was treated as an equal in order to encourage lasting reconciliation.

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1 Quote from Nelson Mandela: http://www.cicd-volunteerinafrica.org/quotations/78-important-subjects/quotations/520-nelson-mandela-quotations

2 http://www.dw.de/serbia-and-kosovo-sign-historic-agreement/a-16758946

Founding Fathers

3. The founders of the European Union were united by the belief in reconciliation after witnessing the destructiveness of both World War I and World War II. They proclaimed that "never again shall there be war between us." Years of violence within the European continent made it obvious that a union of some kind was essential in order to rebuild economically, as well as to ensure peace across Europe. There were several values inspiring the founders which continue to inspire members of the European Union today. The ultimate goal was for a peaceful, united, and prosperous Europe, with the utmost respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of minorities.

4. Several key founders played significant roles in the process of developing a union. The cornerstone of Konrad Adenauer's foreign policy was reconciliation with France, which was significant seeing as he was the first chancellor of Germany after World War II. In 1962, in collaboration with President Charles de Gaulle, Germany and France were able to sign a treaty of friendship,[4] which was a major milestone towards European integration. Prime Minister Winston Churchill was the first to call for a "United States of Europe" and made it his aim to eliminate European ills of nationalism and war mongering. The Italian Alcide de Gasperi worked on both the Marshall Plan,[5] as well as other initiatives that were aimed at the fusion of Western Europe. He developed close economic ties with other European countries, notably France.

5. Jean Monnet[6] was the unifying force behind the birth of the European Union, and was the inspiration behind the Schuman plan[7] ultimately developed by French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, the architect of the European Integration project. The Plan was to have joint control of coal and steel production, with the idea that a state that did not have full control over coal and steel production would be unable to fight a war. Finally, Belgian Foreign

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4 http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/the-elysee-treaty-has-been-a-cornerstone-of-european-stability-a-879002.html

5 http://www.enotes.com/economic-cooperation-act-1948-marshall-plan-reference/economic-cooperation-act-1948-marshall-plan

6 http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Monnet

7 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schuman_Declaration

Minister Paul-Henri Spaak helped to formulate the Treaty of Rome[8] by acting as the president of the working committee for the preparation of the Treaty.

6. One of the earliest, most momentous steps towards creating a united Europe was on April 18, 1951 when the 6 founding countries of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands signed a treaty based on the Schuman Plan to run coal and steel under common management. This allowed no one country to fully develop weapons for a war. It is worthy to note that the common war materials of coal and steel were the first items to be converted into instruments of peace. On March 25, 1957, the Treaties of Rome created both the European Economic Community (EEC),[9] or the common market, and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM).[10] The EEC allowed for the free movement of people, goods, and services across borders. On January 4, 1960, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)[11] is signed and enters into force on May 3, 1960. January 14, 1962 saw the adoption of regulations on the Common Agricultural Policy that created the groundwork for the establishment of a single market for agricultural products and for financial solidarity. Then, on July 15, 1964, it was ruled that community law is to override national laws. Sicco Manscholt from the Netherlands was the first European Commissioner to be responsible for agriculture, and he laid the basis for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).[12] He firmly believed that Europe needed to become self-sufficient and that everyone should be entitled to a stable supply of affordable food.

7. The next significant achievement was in April 1972, when European member states decided to allow their currencies to fluctuate against each other within

8 http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/treaty_of_rome.htm

9 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Economic_Community

10 http://www.euratom.org/

11 http://www.efta.int/about-efta/the-european-free-trade-association.aspx

12 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Agricultural_Policy

narrow limits, known as the Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM),[13] which ultimately developed into the Euro that we know today.

8. In March 1985, the Schengen Agreement[14] takes effect in seven countries, allowing citizens to no longer require passports to travel between these states. On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall collapsed, opening borders between East and West Germany for the first time in over twenty-five years. In February 1992, the Treaty on the European Union[15] is signed in Maastricht, which set clear rules for the future of the single currency, as well as foreign and security policy. At this point, the European Community becomes known as the European Union. The following year, in January, the single market and four freedoms are established: the free movement of goods, services, people, and money.

9. Throughout the 1990s, civil war had erupted in the Balkan states, in which the EU took on peace-keeping operations in March of 2003. EU led forces replaced those of NATO in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Former Yugoslav Republic Macedonia. Finally, the Treaty of Lisbon[16] was signed in December 2007, with the goal of making the EU more democratic, efficient, and transparent and encouraging the tackling of challenges like climate change, security, and sustainable development.

10. The Christian Democratic Party played a noteworthy role in the creation of the European Union as well. Robert Schuman, "the Father of Europe," was a Christian Democrat, the first to put forth a plan for French and German coal and steel production to be placed under one High Authority. In 1953, the publication of the founding declaration of the Christian-Democratic Group was officially recognised. The first meeting of the Common Assembly of the three European Communities (European Parliament) was held in March 1958, with the Christian-Democrats holding the clear majority. The first step towards

13 http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/exchange-rate-mechanism-ERM.html

14 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen_Agreement

15 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maastricht_Treaty

16 http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty/index_en.htm

developing the European People's Party[17] occurred in November 1969 when Hans-August Lucker was elected Chairman of the group. He expanded institutional and organisational links with the national Christian-Democrat parties. The European People's Party was founded in April 1976 and was composed of parties from seven Community countries.

Goals and Aims Today

11. The goals and aims of the European Union today are similar to those goals established during the founding: to provide peace, prosperity, and stability for its citizens; to overcome divisions on the continent; to ensure that its people can live in safety; to promote balanced economic and social development; to meet the challenges of globalisation and preserve the diversity of the peoples of Europe; and to uphold the values that Europeans share, such as sustainable development and a sound environment, respect for human rights, and the social market economy.

12. The objectives of the European Union differ somewhat from the ultimate goals, and include: providing an area of freedom, security, and justice without internal frontiers; providing an internal market with free and undistorted competition; working towards sustainable development based on economic growth and price stability, a highly competitive social market economy, aiming at full employment and social progress, and a high level of protection in quality of the environment. The EU also promotes scientific and technological advances; combating social exclusion and discrimination; social justice and protection; equality between men and women; solidarity between generations and protection of the rights of the child; economic, social, and territorial cohesion; solidarity among member states; and respect of cultural and linguistic diversity.

Enlargement

13. Enlargement of the European Union has played a major role in encouraging the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Union. Through the invitation for ten additional countries to join the EU in 2004, the EU was putting an end to the split between the free world and the Communist bloc. Poland and seven other CEE countries became member of the EU in May 2004. Many have viewed enlargement as an opportunity to promote political stability and economic prosperity within Europe. Enlargement, however, is not a simple

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17 http://www.epp.eu/index.asp

process. In order to become a Member State, a country needs unanimous support from all twenty-seven Members – a conflict or poor relations with just one country could terminate their chances at becoming a Member State. This can be seen through EU-Turkey tensions over Cyprus and through Greece-Macedonia tensions over Macedonia's name. There are also fears by some EU Member States of over-enlargement to countries further east, such as Georgia and Ukraine, due to unwanted migrant labour and the fear that a sovereign debt crisis could slow enlargement.

14. There are currently seven countries that are waiting to join the European Union: Turkey, Iceland, Croatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, and Macedonia. Croatia became a Member State in July 2013, while the other nations are having some difficulties with meeting the requirements of EU membership. Bosnia-Hercegovina continues to suffer from ethnic quarrels, corruption, organised crime, ethnic divisions, and an unstable political climate. Serbia continues to have issues with Kosovo and need to further cooperate with the police and justice mission in Kosovo. Montenegro needs to consolidate rule of law, fight organised crime and corruption, and better protect freedom of expression. Albania also needs to strengthen rule of law and fight organised crime and corruption. Macedonia has made progress in police reform, in fighting corruption, and in human rights, yet their dispute with Greece over the country's name hampers their ability to join both the EU and NATO.

15. Iceland is suffering from a dispute over mackerel fishing since they object to Norway and the EU taking more than ninety-per cent of the total allowable catch recommended by scientists. Financial reform has also been difficult in the country. They do, however, already apply two-thirds of EU laws, and they are in the Schengen Zone and follow single market rules. Their primary concern is the impact that EU laws will have on fishing and whaling, while the EU would gain a more significant role in the Arctic which is rich in untapped energy and mineral resources.

Turkey

16. Turkey has, by far, had the most difficult time progressing towards EU membership. In 1963, the six member states of the then European Economic Community (EEC) signed an agreement with Turkey, confirming and extending the existing ties between the EEC and Turkey. This "Ankara Agreement" was at that time considered, within both the EEC and Turkey, as a first step towards discussions on a possible membership. However, it is remarkable that this agreement is to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2013 and that the special relationship still exists, whereas Turkey is still not a member of the European Union. This indicates a complex relationship between Ankara and the EU.

Turkey sees itself as a bridge between West and East, between Europe and Asia. Turkey believes that it belongs to the West. They are part of NATO since 1952. Turkey feels not accepted by the West. But thanks to the European Union there are no taboos anymore in discussing issues such as the Kurdish and the Armenian issues. There is no unanimity among the EU member states about a possible membership (is Turkey ready for membership?) and both the successive governments and the public opinion in Turkey have been changing their mind on the matter. Turkey still has to normalise its relations with Cyprus, and there are serious concerns about the respect for freedom of speech and democracy, the treatment of religious minorities, women's and children's rights, and the civilian control of the military. It is vital that they strengthen democracy and human rights through judicial reform before they have a chance of becoming a Member State. Others worry that Turkey, as a mainly Muslim country, would change the dynamics of the EU; however, they would provide a younger labour force that could help an aging Europe. The first concern of Turkey goes to the civil war in Syria and its impact for the whole region of the Middle East.

Role of Regions

17. There are several regions within EU Member States that are vying to be independent members of the EU. The primary political party in the Flanders region of Belgium believes that they are dealing with both globalisation and localisation – the EU should handle issues such as defence of the environment, while democracy needs to be closer to the people. They desire to be an independent state within the EU through the dissolution of Belgium and the development of a Flemish state that will be sovereign over the Dutch-speaking territory, and to include Brussels which may have a separate linguistic status. Flanders believes in cooperation with the EU, yet remains restrained and critical, firmly believing that EU territory should not exist beyond European boundaries. A similar such region is the Basque in Spain who want to join the EU on separate but equal footing with Spain.

18. Also, in Spain is the semi-autonomous region of Catalonia. They hope to hold a referendum after elections, which could be followed in the Basque country. Currently, Spain has no constitutional mechanism to allow for the independence of one of its regions, and the EU has no system for the breakup of a Member State. It is also important to remember that EU membership can be blocked by just one member country, meaning Spain could block Catalonia's entrance. Catalonia aims to follow Scotland's example and negotiate a referendum with the central government; however, the Spanish Prime Minister is threatening to block the referendum from occurring. Support for independence in Catalonia has recently risen to over fifty-per cent.

19. The final territory that craves independence is Scotland, UK. Scotland, however, would likely become a separate province, rather than a truly independent state. They wish to keep their currency, the pound sterling, but they will still have interest rates set by a foreign bank, the Bank of England. They would primarily depend on Brussels for policy decisions, and in EU majority voting, Scotland's votes would make little difference. They are having a referendum in the fall of 2014 after negotiating with Prime Minister David Cameron. What remains unknown is whether they would automatically qualify for EU membership, or would they need to apply like any other state wishing to become a member.

Disadvantages

20. There are various points to be made about the European Union that could be considered disadvantages to being a member. Some claim that major policies have failed, and the EU is thus in a demographic, economic, and technological decline. Others claim that there is not enough money spent on defence, seeing as Britain and France have had armed forces cut, and in Libya, for instance, they were dependent on logistics and supplies of the US. Furthermore, people who live within the EU do not identify with it, nor do they have faith in it. People are more closely associated with their national identities, be it French, Polish, Belgian, Spanish, or any other. The EU is essentially undemocratic, seeing as most members are unelected, therefore are unaccountable, and are far removed from citizens. Voter turnout in parliamentary elections is extremely low, and still dropping, since people do not feel that they are being adequately represented.

Advantages

21. More importantly, however, there are numerous advantages to being a Member State of the European Union, the first of which is the free movement of goods, services, people, and money. This has improved trade within the region, as well as migration for education and jobs. There is also the hope that wealth and stability will eventually return to the region. Additionally, the EU has its own foreign service, and it is in the process of trying to create its own intelligence and federal police services. The Erasmus education program[18] allows thousands of EU scholars to study abroad, to share their knowledge and gain from the knowledge of others.

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18 http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-for-all/

22. Finally, and most importantly, peace within the European Union is essentially guaranteed through interdependence. There have been no wars within the EU since World War II, justifying that the primary goal of fostering peaceful relationships between members has been quite successful. There is much negativity towards the EU since the Euro Crisis began, but the Union ultimately just needs more time to evolve. It is a relatively new institution, and it is constantly changing. In comparison, the United States took approximately ninety years to fully come together, so the EU simply needs to be given a chance to continue to progress.

Still Conflicts Within

23. Despite the fact that a war has been avoided within the EU since the end of World War II, there have still been conflicts within the region that the EU has had to address appropriately; the most notable of which may be the conflict in Northern Ireland. There is a long history of discrimination against Catholics by Protestants in Northern Ireland, and the EU developed a peace programme that contained two strands: (1) economic and social development, and (2) addressing the legacy of the conflict as part of the peace process. Under these strands, there were five economic and social priorities: (1) economic renewal through the harnessing of economic opportunities generated by the peace process; (2) social integration, inclusion, and reconciliation with priority being given to vulnerable groups in the worst-affected areas; (3) employing locally based regeneration and development strategies; (4) promoting an outward and forward looking region by encouraging dialogue with other EU regions on economic, social, and environmental issues; and (5) stimulating cross-border economic, social, and cultural cooperation. In the Northern Ireland conflict, the EU effectively promoted the peace process by realising the importance of communication and reconciliation in the process of reuniting Northern Ireland. The DDR (demobilisation, demilitarization and re-integration) of former armed people from both sides in Northern Ireland is still not yet finished. Peace does not come without pain. A "win-win" is the best solution. It is all about "identity" and an inclusive dialogue.

24. Another significant conflict within the European Union was the issue of the division of Cyprus between Turkish-Cyprus and Greek-Cyprus. In this situation, EU accession was perceived to be an act aimed towards finding a resolution to the division of the island and was to act as a pressure to reach a solution. It has been determined that the most progress in resolving the conflict was done within the last three years before accession, with accession effectively acting as a major catalyst in discussions of reuniting. Although the country is reunited and a member of the EU today, the use of EU accession as a catalyst did not have a completely positive outcome on the situation between Turkey and Cyprus. At the Luxembourg summit of 1997, Cyprus was accepted as a candidate country despite the fact that it was still divided at the time.

Meanwhile, at the same summit, Turkey was told that it had to work on finding a solution to the Turkey-Cyprus conflict before it would become a candidate country. This had utterly disastrous effects on EU-Turkey relations.

25. Since the breakup of the former Yugoslav Republic, there has been much conflict in the Western Balkans. The Union's policy towards the region is stabilisation through integration. In 2000, the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP)[19] was launched, which offered Balkan countries the idea of eventual EU membership. It was later determined at the EU-Western Balkans summit in 2003 that the Balkans will have a future within the EU. In the Balkans, however, soft power has not been enough to encourage the same transformations as were seen in Central and Eastern Europe, thus the region was the site of the first EU security missions under the European Defence and Security Policy. Perhaps the EU should take on more of a peace building role in the Balkans, similarly to the actions taken in Northern Ireland, to encourage reconciliation and dialogue between fighting factions, rather than a stronger military role.

Conflicts between Peoples

26. The European Union also has a long history of issues and conflicts between peoples and populations. First and foremost, Germans and Poles have disliked each other for decades, due primarily to atrocities committed during World War II. Over time, however, they have grown into normalised neighbours. Many Poles feel badly about the process of resettlement of Germans following the Second World War, but they felt that it had to be done. Poland has grown to increasingly support Germany within the European Union; they would prefer to have a stronger Germany within the EU than risk Germany leaving the Eurozone, which would likely lead to the disintegration of the entire EU.

27. Further conflict can be seen through the observation of Serbians, Croatians, and the Serbian minority in Kosovo. When Kosovo banned Serbian goods from entering the country, Croatia offered to fill the void through trading with Kosovo. This greatly upset Serbia and their negative reaction demonstrated how positive Serbian-Croatian relations are necessary for regional stability. Following the entrance of Croatia into the EU in July 2013, their relations will prove even more vital. Furthermore, in 2011, Serbia indicted Croatian

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19 http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/sap_en.htm

nationals on counts of war crimes, which angered Croatian officials because they want to deal with the criminals themselves. Additionally, Kosovo has plans to reintegrate Northern Kosovo, which is primarily Serbian and would prefer to be united with Serbia rather than Kosovo. The issues in the North are hindering Kosovo from beginning negotiations to enter the EU, who says that Kosovo is nearly ready to begin negotiations for a Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA)[20] but needs to continue to work on the issues in the North and to protect minorities.

Economic and Financial Crisis

28. Although the EU works towards economic unity and interdependence, the recent and on-going crisis in Greece has proven that even further restrictions and monitoring are required in order to ensure that the entire Eurozone does not fall apart. The economic crisis destroyed Greece's economy, brought down its government, caused social unrest, and threatened the Euro's future. The country is suffering from a recession due to the austerity measures that have been demanded by France and Germany in return for massive bailouts. Although fellow EU Member States have agreed to the bailouts and a Greek debt restructuring, it has not been easy. Greece continues to have major deficits and the emergency funds that the country received have not been paying for public services, but are rather being used to pay some of the interest on the debt. It is important in the case of Greece, as well as with Cyprus, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, that the EU remembers that they are working together to save a landmark Union of vastly different countries; they must remember that the citizens of the EU come first. If Greece is unable to improve societal structures, then their debt will never truly be cleared.

Peace Building Efforts

29. The European Union acts as a peace-building entity through three primary areas of policy, the first of which is development and cooperation. While the EU continues to be the world's largest aid donor, it also uses trade in order to drive development by opening markets to exports in developing countries. The Union's primary objective in this policy area is to eradicate poverty using a sustainable approach; it wants to give people control over their own development by: (1) attacking sources of vulnerability, such as poor access to food or clean water, education, health, employment, land, social services, infrastructure, and healthy environment; (2) eradicating disease and providing access to cheap medicines for epidemics like HIV/AIDS; (3) reducing the debt burden which diverts resources from public investments; and (4) promoting

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20 http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kosovo/press_corner/all_news/news/2012/10102012_01_en.htm

self-help and poverty eradication strategies that allow developing countries to consolidate the democratic process, expand social programmes, strengthen their institutional framework, increase private and public sector capacity, and reinforce respect for human rights.

30. The second policy area is humanitarian aid and civil protection, which includes crisis relief, and runs relief operations in areas with long-running crises and post-conflict instability. The EU was present in Libya, Afghanistan, and Palestine, among other nations. The EU's European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO)[21] has the duty to save lives, reduce suffering, and protect the integrity and dignity of those affected through emergency assistance including the delivery of tents, blankets, food, medicines, medical equipment, water purification systems, and fuel. ECHO also funds medical teams, mine-clearance experts, and provides transport/logistical support.

31. The final policy area which promotes the EU as a peace-builder is in human rights. The EU supports efforts to combat racism, xenophobia, and other types of discrimination, specifically in the areas of asylum and migration. Furthermore, the EU's humanitarian assistance is not subject to restrictions based on human rights breaches; aid is provided with the aim of relieving human suffering regardless of the cause. In order to promote respect for human rights and democracy, the EU has chosen to focus on four areas: (1) strengthening democracy, good governance, and rule of law; (2) abolishing the death penalty; (3) combating torture through preventative action, such as police training, and punitive measures, such as employing the use of the International Criminal Court; and (4) fighting racism and discrimination by ensuring respect for political and civil rights. Despite the efforts of the EU, discrimination remains prevalent within the Union, especially in regards to the migration of the Roma, which most EU Member States view to be an ethnic disadvantage in society.

32. The European Union has long been involved in African affairs, and there are two specific instances in which the EU aimed to work as a peace-builder in the region; however, in reality they acted more as a non-strategic state-builder. Peace-builders focus primarily on supporting human rights, civil society, and local institutions, whereas state-builders focus on security and the maintenance of shared sovereignty through an emphasis on good governance programs. Non-strategic state-building differs from strategic state-building in that it seeks to regulate but does not result in a neo-colonial imposition of rule, rather in external rule that promotes self-help and self-improvement thus leading to shared sovereignty. The EU's three policy areas aimed towards peace-building as mentioned earlier seem to fit this description precisely.

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21 http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm

Democratic Republic of the Congo

33. We begin by observing the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. When colonial rule ended, there was a relationship of structural economic dependency between the state of Zaire and the West. President Mobutu was brought into power and maintained control due to support from the US, Belgium, France, and other Western nations. When Western powers and international organisations put pressure on Mobutu to democratise, the economic crisis worsened and further undermined state institutions. When the Rwanda Patriotic Front seized power in Kigali, around two million refugees flooded into eastern Congo and congregated in large refugee camps near the border in North and South Kivu, which deepened already existent divisions between native Kivu and Rwandans. Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, and Burundi formed an anti-Mobutu alliance which controlled Congolese rebel groups. Rwanda and Uganda then formed the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo-Zaire, led by Laurent Kabila. When Laurent was assassinated, his son Joseph took over and was prepared to negotiate with all rebels, work more closely with the international community, and to allow the UN to militarily intervene. Agreements were signed and Joseph Kabila became the transitional president, with four vice-presidents from various rebel groups. Violence continued throughout the transition, especially in North and South Kivu, Ituri, and eastern Katanga.

34. The process of integrating the armed forces of the warring groups essentially failed, further causing violence to ensue. In November 2004, Kabila recruited local armed groups to defeat Nkunda, a former General in the transitional army who rebelled against the Kabila government. Nkunda fought in North Kivu between November 2006 and the end of 2009, alleging to protect the Tutsi. He defeated Kabila's forces in 2008, and by winter of 2008, MONUC[22] had intervened calling for a cease-fire, and the US, South Africa, and European partners of Rwanda were mobilised to put pressure on Nkunda to see it through. The DR Congo and Rwanda decided to work together to put an end to Nkunda, and he was captured in 2009. Their joint mission, however, resulted in the deterioration of the humanitarian situation and there were another 160,000 refugees in North Kivu in a two month period.

35. During the first period of the conflict, between 1996 and 2002, the European Union as a whole had little involvement in the Congo. The UK and the US were the predominant positions on the UN Security Council, and the EU accepted this. Belgium, France, and the US, however, were the main countries

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22 http://www.un.org/fr/peacekeeping/missions/past/monuc/index.shtml

that shaped Western policy towards the DR Congo. Between 1996 and 1997, the EU General Assembly did not condemn the actions of the RPF against the refugees in eastern Congo because the British and US governments' views that the events in the DR Congo were strictly an internal matter were predominant. The French government, the EC Commissioner for Humanitarian Action, and the Belgian Foreign Minister wanted an EU or UN intervention force to protect the refugees.

36. Between 2003 and 2007, the EU began assuming a non-strategic state-building role in the DR Congo. The EU participated in the International Committee in Support for Transition, which shaped political decisions for the DR Congo. The EU contributed to drafting the Constitution, defining the formation of the government, and prepared for the election. Also, the EU began to encourage the use of security tools, emphasise state-institutions and good governance programmes, and support elections in a highly-militarised environment. The EU's increased involvement did have some positive outcomes, including: (a) persuading leaders to renounce armed struggle; (b) providing humanitarian aid and peace-building activities; and (c) contributing to the introduction of laws to stop discrimination; however, because decentralisation was included as a key element in the Constitution, EU strategy contributed to legitimising gains made by conflicting parties.

37. In contradiction to the fact that the EU aims to be a peace-builder is the use of military forces in conflict zones. In 2003, the EU undertook its first military operation in Sub-Saharan Africa, which led to an increase in EU security missions towards the DR Congo. These operations were driven by various concerns. The initial use of military was launched to deal with a humanitarian emergency, but it was more to test the emerging European Security and Defence Policy. The other two EU missions aimed to reform the security sector and to facilitate the integration of the armed groups into a new army, which ultimately contributed to an increase in armed violence due to the lack of desire to integrate into a power-sharing unit by rebel forces.

38. In early 2002, the European Commission and the Congolese government signed a national indicative programme in which the EU supported the facilitation of the Inter-Congolese dialogue and wished to act as a stimulant for international aid. The aim was to build a stronger, improved relationship between the DR Congo and the EU. EC development programmes had a number of significant state-building features, such as: (a) development aid was used to finance security sector missions; (b) increased development aid was targeted at good governance programmes, like the reform of public sectors, local governance, and the privatisation of local businesses; (c) aid was used to provide support to state budgets; and (d) aid was closely intertwined with using military means to support elections. Additionally, the Congolese government agreed to delegate powers to a National Authorising

Officer within the EC to implement major donor project, including projects in infrastructural work, health and urban development, and major humanitarian aid programmes. Thus, the Commission functioned as the government in these areas. The EU continues to maintain a large say in the DR Congo through direct budget-support.

39. Despite the fact that the EU certainly provided humanitarian assistance and aid in the DR Congo, they primarily acted as a state-building entity rather than a peace-builder, as seen through their extensive involvement in the security sector, diplomatic engagements during the transitional period, the deployment of several military operations, and the emphasis on good governance programmes. The EU acted as a *non-strategic state builder*, rather than a strategic one, for a number of reasons. First, there was no EU consensus about the strategy to be employed. Second, the varying perspectives displayed that there was not a full understanding of local and regional interactions. Third, EU tended to emphasise building institutions from above rather than resolving local issues and emphasising the needs of the people. Fourth, the EU failed to devise a plan in which warring factions would give up their military strategies to achieve political power, despite security sector involvement. Finally, EU officials did not adequately use their financial and human resources to address the interaction between local causes of conflict. Acting in this sense shows us that the EU may have initially entered the DR Congo with the intentions of acting strictly as a peace-builder, but with no defined plan they ended up working more as a state-builder along with other nations.

40. It is rather clear that today, the European Union aims to act as a non-strategic state builder, especially in regard to Africa. The EU's policy towards Africa states that their aims are to "strengthen and promote peace, security, democratic governance and human rights, fundamental freedoms, gender equality, sustainable economic development including industrialisation, and regional and continental integration in Africa." Additionally, due to their uniquely shared history, the two regions have laid the foundation for cooperation based on the need to promote universal approaches to security including conflict prevention and peace-building, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, linked to governance and sustainable development. It is important to realise that if the EU was strictly working to better conflict-afflicted areas, then they would likely not focus on governance and reforming government security institutions and participating in military interventions than they would on addressing conflict resolution from the ground up, working primarily with grassroots organisations and local communities to resolve issues, followed by working up the ladder to government and security reforms.

Israel & Palestine

41. The conflict between Israel and Palestine is currently a hot topic globally, and especially in the European Union, with a central aim being a lasting peace in the Middle East. It has been easy to see through time that Israel has the upper-hand in its conflict with Palestine: they have the support of the United States and other powerful members of the international community and they are stronger militarily; however, in order to reach a peace agreement, the power balance needs to be more equal. Israel should be treated just like any other country – their occupation of Palestinian territory and abuses of human rights are illegal according to international law. Palestine receives sympathy from many states in the Muslim world, and the EU would make great improvements in its Middle East cooperation if they were to break away from the shadow of the US and show more support for Palestine. Additionally, the EU may receive more political goodwill if they were seen to be working towards a solution to the conflict.

42. The EU is Israel's biggest trading partner, which gives significant leverage to the European Union. Theoretically, the EU could suspend trade with Israel since "The European Union-Israel Association Agreement,"[23] which regulates trade between the two entities, is based upon a respect for human rights, which Israel has violated. Furthermore, when Hamas won the democratic election, the EU demanded that Hamas denounce violence, acknowledge previous agreements Israel had made with the Palestinian Authority, and to accept Israel's right to exist, none of which were asked of Israel, thus clearly demonstrating the bias. If the EU had not put as much pressure on Hamas, their strategy could have been more successful.

43. In order to encourage a peaceful solution to the excessively violent conflict, the European Union must fully employ its role as a peace-builder. They must be independent of the influence of the United States in their treatment of Hamas and Israel. It is possible to be impartial, and this is vital in order to foster a true power balance that may one day result in a peace accord. The EU has the ability to play a major role in the conflict between Israel and Palestine, but only if they are willing to break away from the US, put more pressure on Israel, and take a bit more of a relaxed position towards Hamas. Reconciliation will not be realistic until Palestine and Israel are regarded as equals – the European Union has the opportunity to be the leader on the path towards this.

Soul of Europe

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23 http://eeas.europa.eu/israel/index_en.htm

44. Former President of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, believe that Europe needed to have a soul; that there needed to be a spiritual and ethical dimension to the European Union – legal and economic expertise were not enough for the EU to succeed. Thus, A Soul for Europe[24] was developed in 1994. It was an incredibly forward-thinking initiative whose goal was to involve religious communities in dialogue with the European institutions. Religious communities were encouraged to present projects with the potential to receive grants. We at Pax Christi International believe that Jacques' belief in providing the EU with spirituality and meaning is quite significant today. The EU is suffering from a lack of connection; EU citizens do not feel like EU citizens. A uniting force is missing, and should be more seriously pursued by the European Union bodies. Encouraging and stimulating a sense of spirituality among such a multitude of religions and individuals would further motivate work towards peace.

Nobel Prize 2012: The EU

45. The Nobel Peace Prize of 2012 was awarded to the European Union for contributing "to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe" for over six decades.[25] Although the EU undoubtedly aims to work for peace within the Union and around the world, as can be witnessed through their peace building efforts in the DR Congo and Israel-Palestine, as well as peace-oriented policies, the EU still has a long way to go to truly earn the title of a peace building entity. Upon receipt of the Nobel Prize, there was much criticism voiced in the media, especially since the European Union is a bloc that is strongly based on military power. Past winners including Desmond Tutu, Mairead Maguire and Adolfo Perez Esquivel shared their opposition to the EU receiving the award seeing as it is strongly based on military force to ensure security. Alfred Nobel intended for the prize to be given to those who work towards disarmament, but the EU remains one of the biggest weapons producers in the world.[26] The EU received the Prize one year after several member states intervened military in Libya. The discourse about European integration is not evidently a peace discourse.

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24 http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/policy_advisers/archives/activities/dialogue_religions_humanisms/sfe_en.htm

25 http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2012/press.html

26 http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/10/us-nobel-eu-idUSBRE8B906M20121210

45. Similarly to the European Union, Pax Christi International was created based on reconciliation and was originally formed as a Crusade of Prayer for Germany. By the end of World War II, people were longing for peace. The first powerful symbol of the rebuilding Europe was a peace pilgrimage in France. Bishops in both France and Germany gave their support to the growth of Pax Christi, and soon the organisation expanded into a Crusade of Prayer for all Nations. From then, Pax Christi grew quickly, and in 1952 began to be identified by Pope Pius XII as the International Catholic Peace Movement.

46. Pax Christi International believes that the root causes of conflict must be addressed in order to promote long-term solutions. The movement believes that the EU recognises this, yet often has taken on more of a state-building role, rather than a peace-building one. The European Union has discouraged war within the Union for over sixty years, and needs to be given the continued opportunity to grow and manage its internal problems. Meanwhile, the EU Member States must work towards developing a consensus on how to deal with external conflicts, since historically, actions in regions such as Africa and the Middle East have been highly contended.

Fr. Paul Lansu

Pax Christi International

Warsaw, 21 October 2013

2012-0488-en-eu-PB

Further Reading:

1. http://www.historyonthenet.com/WW1/versailles.htm
2. http://giovannabono.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/bonowiscfffxxx.pdf
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