

**The best strategic Use of the Common Security and Defence Policy
for EU-Africa Relations**

Essay

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Abstract

The Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union should increase the security of Member States. There are specific strategies not only for Europe but for our neighbouring countries as well. This implements a cooperation with the African Union and suggests that our security is depending on the security beyond our borders.

Such an important topic requires many *columns*. A various number of fact sheets, documents, and essays were developed, signed, and executed by both parties. These papers state that a mixture of military operations, civilian missions, and establishing functional governmental institutions is needed to ensure better conditions for the development of African countries. The current research lacks concrete plans for the future of such a relationship. This essay focuses on how the strategies of the Common Security and Defence Policy can be used at their best to improve the present relationship between the African and the European Union.

Comparing several official papers published by the African and the European Union and their institutions it might be vital to look at the cooperation's structure from a wider perspective. This can help illuminate dark spots and problems still consisting within the relationship.

The essay aims at creating a mind set on how countries have to be stabilised in order to enhance security in their own population which effects the security in Europe.

Keywords:

African Union, CSDP, European Union, Missions and Operations, Strategic use.

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2. Preface

During the author's studies at the Austrian Military Academy, he gets confronted with the political and military framework of the EU (European Union). Especially for Austria this cooperation is very important, as it offers a small country the possibility to gain information from other security and defence ministries.

At present days, Austria does not have the capability to launch an operation and to keep it online on its own. However, the network of the Union allows this Central-European country to take part in such operations and to perform on the global stage.

In times where political systems are doing 180 degree turns and the support of the population for the military is decreasing, members of the armed forces should receive the opportunity to explain the reasons why it is so important to participate in international military operations. Climate change, terrorism, and political disturbances put Africa in the focus of the EU's CSDP (Common Security and Defence Policy).

At this point, the author would like to take the opportunity to thank Col Assoc. Prof. Gell Harald, PhD, MSc, MSD, MBA and Ass.-Prof. Dr. Ratheiser Ulla.

3. Introduction

Having a plan is the starting point of any strategy and aims at accomplishing a defined mission or operation. The CSDP is the strategy of the EU, used to create a safer environment in and around Europe. This essay deals with the problems both Unions are likely to face in the future. It focuses on the basic ideas of the CSDP and its fields which might hold a possibility for improvement. At the end of the essay it should be clear to the reader which threats have to be managed by the ambitions. In order to be able to find an answer to such a difficult question, a lot of information is required. Many different documents, of which most are from the EU and the African-European partnership, should help the author to handle such a wide-ranging topic.

The EU is one of the driving forces in the world when it comes to supporting nations during a state of emergency. It not only has the financial resources to intervene in unstable regions, but it also has the manpower – even though not united as preferred by many members of the military – to put boots on the ground. One of the most important aspects of the EU's role as driving force is the political power which the partners of the EU can count on. This suggests that a plan has to focus on the most valuable resource – the people. To establish a stable zone around Europe, the cooperation with the local governmental systems is the key to success. Any dictating ideas, laws, or structures coming from a government or organisation thousands of kilometres away, would make the current situation in an unstable region much worse than it would help. A clear sight is given by looking at the current state of research.

4. Current State of Research

*“The European Union’s commitment to peace and security in Africa is growing, and the deterioration of the security environment in parts of that continent [...] creates challenges and threats that need to be adequately and effectively addressed.”*¹ The third Edition of the CSDP Handbook which was published in 2017, underlines the importance of the cooperation between the European States and the African Governments.

This chapter gives the reader an overview of the current state of research, especially in the fields of the strategic use of the CSDP for the EU-African relations. During the research process, the author gathered a lot of information on the relation between the AU (African Union) and the EU, as well as its missions, operations, and cooperation. These documents were provided by the EU or the AU and made available on the World Wide Web.

This paper tries to create a liaison between all this information. The following chapters deal with the main sources – Handbook on Common Security and Defence Policy 2017, the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, EUGS (European Global Strategy) and PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) – which were found by the author and are relevant in the process of finding an answer to the research question.

4.1 The Handbook on Common Security and Defence Policy 2017

In 2007, the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was signed by the African and the European Union. Due to this contract, the African-EU operation elevated to a strategic level.² The difference between the levels will be explained in the following chapters.

1 Rehr, J. (2017). Handbook on CSDP. The Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union. Vienna. Austrian Armed Forces Printing Centre. ISBN 978-92-95201-04-0. Third Edition. Page 86.

2 Ibid. Page 175.

4.2 The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership

One of the four main objectives of the long-term partnership and probably the most important one is the aim to restore peace and security. It is the foundation for a working political and economic system as well as for the social development.³

4.3 The European Union Global Strategy

*“It is in the interests of our citizens to invest in the resilience of states and societies [...] and south down to Central Africa. [...] to reform, thus withstanding and recovering from internal and external crises [...].”*⁴ These actions stated in the EU Global Strategy can be seen as an investment in the security of Europe.⁵

4.4 Permanent Structured Cooperation

PESCO is one of the most relevant instruments to secure Europe and its citizens. It allows the EU to strengthen the operational cooperation between the Member States which supports the strategic autonomy. This possibility allows the EU to act alone or with partners, like the AU, whenever requested.⁶

Despite their relevance for the creating process, the documents introduced here are insufficient in providing an answer to the research question.

3 Cf.: African Union & European Union. (2007). The Africa-EU Strategic Partnership. A Joint Africa-EU Strategy. Lisbon. Page 4.

4 Mogherini, F. (2016). Shared Visions, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the Europeans Union´s Foreign and Security Policy. Brussels. Page 23.

5 Cf.: Ibid. Page 36.

6 Cf.: EU. (2018). Permanent Structured Cooperation – PESCO. Deepening Defence Cooperation among EU Member States. Brussels. Page 3-4.

5. Research Gap

“Due to their history and experience, Africa and Europe understand the importance of peace and security as preconditions for political, economic and social development. On this basis, the two continents have laid the foundation for successful cooperation based on the need to promote holistic approaches to security, encompassing, conflict prevention and long-term peace-building, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, linked to governance and sustainable development, with a view to addressing the root causes of conflicts.”⁷

Similar to this declaration by the AU and EU, the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership defines in a very specific way that the key for success is the cooperation with the host nation. The need for cooperation is also stressed by the EUGS, according to which the goal to make Europe safer can only be achieved by a detailed strategy which is signed, accepted, and supported by the Signature States.

What the detailed goals and plans of these declarations have in common is that they address the topic of this paper one way or another. However, as most of the official papers will reach the end of their life span in the near future, new opportunities will open up to drive the research of this essay forward.

7 African Union & European Union. (2007). Op. cit. Page 4-5.

6. Research Questions

The question that arises from the current state of research is:

What is the best strategic use of the Common Security and Defence Policy for EU-Africa Relations?

For a better understanding of the issue and to explore the question appropriately, the following angles of investigation have been chosen.

Sub-question 1: Which are the key points of the current Common Security and Defence Policy between these two Unions?

Sub-question 2: Which are the strategic ideas of the CSDP?

Sub-question 3: Which challenges does the AU have to face in the near future in relation to the CSDP?

Sub-question 4: Are there fields for improving the current strategy?

7. Methodology

The question “*what the best strategic Use of the Common Security and Defence Policy for EU-Africa Relations is*”, will be explored by looking at a wide range of sources, in order to achieve the best possible result. These sources range from official EU and AU documents and articles to officially published internet-based information from the official websites.

As outlined in the previous chapter, the topic will be approached from four angles which will also inform about the structure of this paper. The methodology of this essay will rely on a hermeneutical approach which is an author-based interpretation.

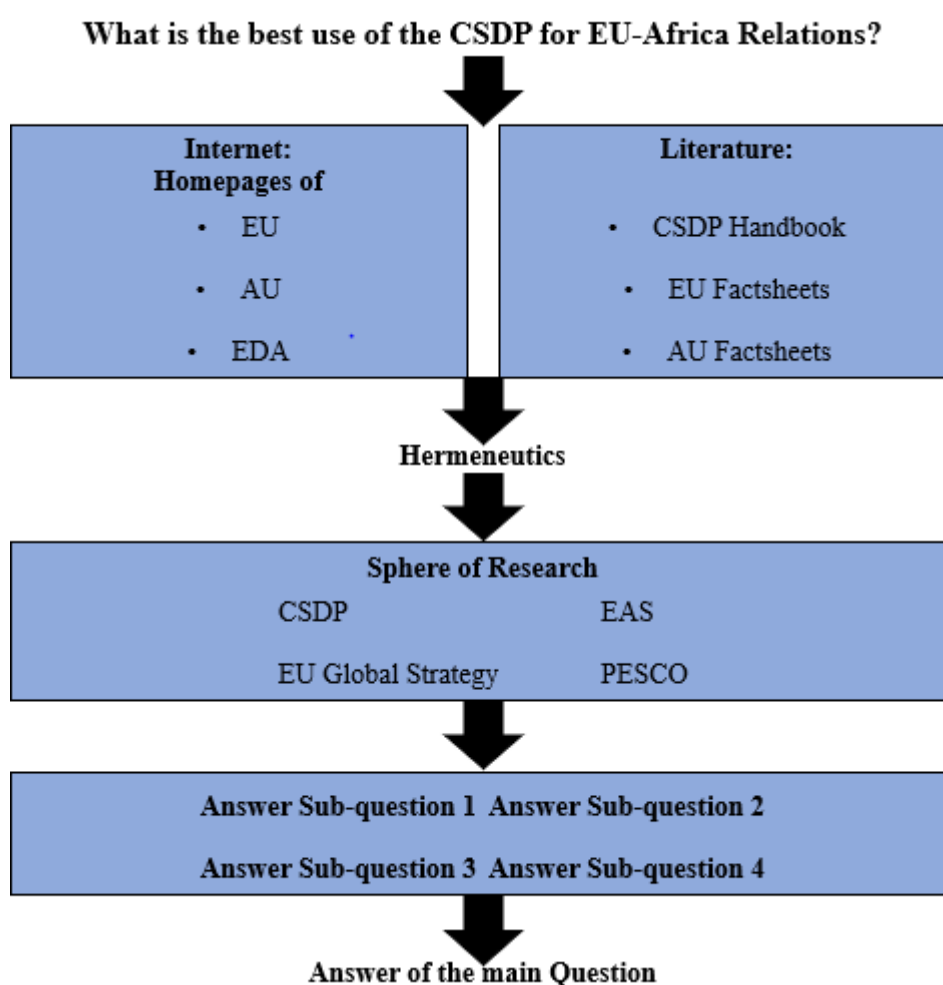


Figure 1: Flowchart of the hermeneutical approach to answer the main question.⁸

⁸ Figure created by the author.

The previous figure shows the path of the research process as well as the way how the author answered the sub- and main question.

8. Research and Results of Research

8.1 The current Common Security and Defence Policy between the African and the European Union

Every plan, no matter if it is a military plan or the plan to create a stronger relationship, consists of principles and objectives. Also, the partnership between the AU and the EU is built on principles and objectives which are the key to a successful cooperation. It is necessary to define those main objectives in very specific terms in order to be able to reach them.

The African continent is known for its beautiful nature, its diversity of wild animals, deposits of mineral resources, colonial past, military and civilian conflicts, terrorism, smuggling, slavery, poverty and much more. It is obvious that the main objectives are to focus on those threats and problems.

The representatives of the two political organisations involved have declared four main objectives for their cooperation:

- To strengthen institutional relationships, especially concerning peace and security, development and migration, to protect nature and to reinforce and elevate the partnership.⁹
- To reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. To help stabilise the continent, establish and strength democracy and human rights; to push industrialisation forward relying on sustainable economic development.¹⁰
- To create strong governmental institutions which are able to fight pandemics, terrorism, and migration in cooperation with an updated United Nations system.

9 Cf.: African Union & European Union. (2007). Op. cit. Page 2.

10 Cf.: Ibid. Page 2.

Those institutions also have to be able to provide energy security, reduce the trading of small arms and light weapons, and decrease Weapons of Mass Destruction.¹¹

- To build a people centred partnership with powerful non-state actors that are able to support the plans of these partners. The strategy ought to function as a permanent platform for information exchange and an ongoing dialogue.¹²

Obviously, this partnership does not only try to solve current problems, but also aims at creating a base for the next generation to build their future on.

Both organisations have declared a catalogue, in which they list the actions and challenges that the strategy will face.

Austria is currently taking part in four EU missions, two of which deal with problems in Africa. The first one takes place in the Mediterranean Sea with the objective to reduce the frequency of people who are smuggled over the sea.¹³ The second mission that Austria takes part in, is the EUTM (European Union Training Mission Mali). Austria supports this mission with 46 soldiers and equipment. The EU trains Mali soldiers to improve their capability to: *“Contribute to improving the capacity of MAF under the full control of political authorities in view to: 1. Consolidate the operational and strategic improvements of the MAF obtained with the support of EUTM Mali; 2. Contribute to the political and security stabilization of Mali, through the technical support to the implementation of the Agreement; 3. Support the "restoration" of state control, Rule of Law and Order over the whole territory of Mali.”*¹⁴ Clearly, the key objectives of the EU and AU are used as specific objectives for that mission such as contributions to stabilising the country or to build up a MAF (Mali Armed Forces) which is able to act on a strategic level. These goals lead us to the next chapter.

11 Cf.: Ibid. Page 2-3.

12 Cf.: Ibid. Page 3.

13 Cf.: Homepage of Austrian Armed Forces. Page Mission of the Austrian Armed Forces. Dates and Facts. URL: <http://www.bundesheer.at/ausle/zahlen.shtml>. [22-10-19].

14 European Union External Action Service. (2019). Common Security and Defence Policy European Training Mission Mali (EUTM Mali). Brussel. European Union External Action Service. Page 1.

8.2 The strategic Ideas of the Common Security and Defence Policy

In 1969 many historical events happened. Apollo 11 did the first moon landing and Richard Nixon became the 37th President of the United States of America. Also, in Europe things moved forward when the political systems changed.¹⁵ In December of the same year the foreign ministers received the order from their chancellors to develop new ways for closer cooperation in a political way.¹⁶ In 1998, under the Austrian EU Presidency, two informal meetings were held. The output of those meetings was the demand for a more active Europe. Furthermore, those councils were the initiators for the Saint-Malo meetings which kicked off the ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy). After several meetings, the European Council decided that the civilian and military organisations should be able to fulfil the *“Petersberg tasks, consisting of humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks, and tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peacemaking.”*¹⁷ Those tasks maybe also contribute to the actions against terrorism, as it is also mentioned in the EAS (European Agency Service) *“This cooperation, which will include matters relating to counter-terrorism, will take place through the exchange of information, law enforcement and institutional capacity building and judicial cooperation.”*¹⁸ To be able to ensure that, the EAS has to be based on legal framework such as the EUGS. The security and defence sector was put under the top ten priority areas of the EU Global strategy. That also includes the strengthening of the cooperation between external partners such as the AU.¹⁹

In 2003, the first ESDP missions and operations went online. Since that day more than 30 missions and operations were launched.

The question is: What is the strategic idea of the Common Security and Defence Policy? There are several bullet points which are part of the strategic idea. For example, the reduction of the dependency on other security and defence systems, and the rising of the budget to make the European defence industry valuable and interesting to the EU Member

15 Cf.: Homepage Wikipedia. Page 1969. URL: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/1969>. [05-11-2019].

16 Cf.: Rehl, J. (2017). Op. cit. Page 16.

17 Rehl, J. (2017). Op. cit. Page 17.

18 The African and European Union.(2007). Op. cit. Page5-6.

19 Cf.: Rehl, J. (2017). Op. cit. Page 18.

States. Last but not least a concrete action plan was set up with fields of cooperation for existing partnerships.²⁰ On the 14th November 2016 the ministers released a paper on which they agreed on new ambitions in the CSDP sector. The three main points are: *”Enabling the European Union to respond more comprehensively, rapidly and effectively to crises, in particular in our neighbourhood; helping to make our partners stronger when it comes to their security and defence; and strengthening the European Union’s capacity to protect European citizens, by working more closely together on security.”*²¹

The priorities of the CSDP are clear. Economic welfare is one of the major columns for a stable state. To achieve economic welfare in a state certain key points have to exist. Before the EU can offer support, it is advised to guarantee a safe environment at home.²² Distance is all that matters, at the end it all comes together to simple maths. The key regions for the EU are those between Central Asia and Central Africa. A stable state reduces the possibility of a mass emigration. During the time of economic disturbances, the criminal activities rise. In such cases the EU takes action. To survive on the global market, under global pressures and local pushback, it is very important to reap the economic gains and to deal with security affairs.²³ To summarise the major idea of the EU Global Strategy, a state needs a well working economic system, which is only achievable under certain circumstances. A state of economic welfare has to be based on security, peace, and health. Therefore the AU-EU relationship should prioritise the mentioned key points. This is the only way to fight terrorism, pandemics, criminal activities, and other threats. The EU tries to achieve this economic welfare in cooperation with the AU.

8.3 Challenges for the African Union

Similar to the European Union, the African Union was founded on a historically version of the AU. Other than the EU, which is made up of merely 28 of the 47 Member States, the African Union consists of all 55 African states. Nowadays, more than 1.3 Billion

20 Cf.: Ibid. Page 24.

21 Ibid. Page 26.

22 Cf.: Rehrl, J. (2017). Op. cit. Third edition. Page 21.

23 Cf.: Ibid. Page 22.

people live in Africa on more than 29 million square kilometres. The GDP (gross domestic product) of 2016 was 2.325 trillion US Dollars. Countries worldwide provide 40 Billion US Dollars for development aid in African countries 50.1% are donated by the EU.^{24 25}

According to the African-EU partnership, four working fields were declared:

- Investing in people – education, science, technology, and skills development.
- Strengthen resilience, peace, security, and governance.
- Mobilising investments for African structural sustainable transformation.
- Migration and mobility.

In comparison to the African-EU partnership and the CSDP, the author decided to focus on the most important aspects between those two documents.

8.4 Fields for improving the current strategy

The previous chapters dealt with the current stage of the CSDP; the following chapter should point out fields for improvement. It is based on the challenges for the AU and the EU. The CSDP should not be the main tool to tackle these complex issues; it should be an additional tool.²⁶

8.4.1 Prevention of new Conflicts

After decades of war, crises, and terrorism, Africa needs to establish stable governments over the continent in cooperation with the EU. The EU is willing to allocate support funds for this security. The budget for CPPB (conflict prevention and peacebuilding) was raised in the previous decade to 854 million Euros per year. More than a tenth of the EU-development budget for the period of 2014-2020 is reserved for conflict prevention, resolution, peace building, and security-related activities.²⁷ Peacebuilding shall face the

24 Homepage African Union. URL: <https://au.int/>. [18-11-2019]. Passim.

25 Cf.: Homepage European Union. URL: https://europa.eu/european-union/index_de. [18-11-2019].

26 Cf.: Rehr, J. (2017). Op. cit. Page 106.

27 Cf.: Ibid. Page 187.

roots of the problem rather than the symptoms, therefore, the EU is advised to use all the available tools.²⁸ In order to be more effective, the EU has to ensure a smooth transformation from peacemaking/peacebuilding to long-term peace and stability.²⁹

The following figure shows the transformation process from a hot conflict to long-term peace and stability.

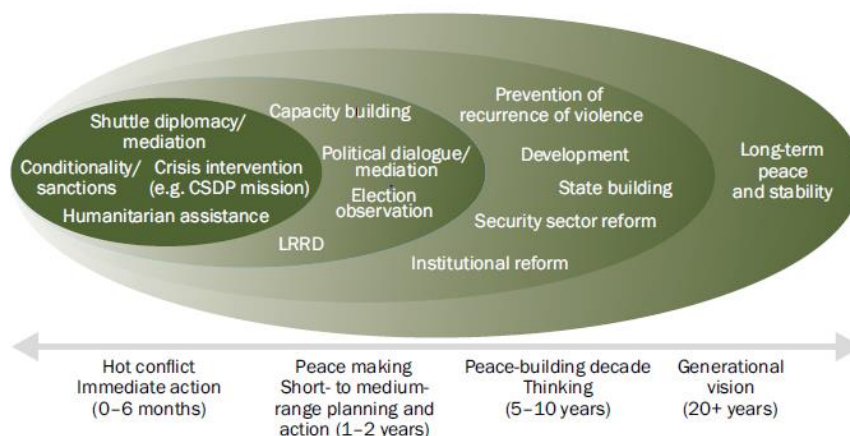


Figure 2: Process from peacemaking to long-term peace and stability.³⁰

8.4.3 Counter-Terrorism

The AU declares that it will intensify and promote the fight against terrorism with all necessary means. To enable this action, the cooperation has to intensify its efforts, for example by exchanging information, training in counter terrorism actions, and supporting the ongoing efforts in all sectors.³¹ Weak states, torn by wars and conflicts, are the perfect soil for terrorism.³² Such regions have to be prioritised by the CSDP. It is very important to add counter terrorism aspects in order to deal more effectively with these threats. As already mentioned, this approach points out that it is crucial to intensify the exchange of

28 Cf.: Ibid. Page 188.

29 Cf.: Ibid. Page 189.

30 Cf.: Ibid. Page 191.

31 Cf.: African Union & European Union. (2017). Final Declaration AU EU Summit. Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development. Côte d'Ivoire. Page 8.

32 Cf.: Rehr, J. (2017). Op. Cit. Page 116.

related information, counterterrorism enforcement, and the judiciary. These actions aim at removing the roots of terrorism, which are similar to the roots of migration, both of which require similar treatments.³³

9. Discussion of Results and personal Conclusions

In this chapter the author discusses pros and cons, presents his personal opinion, and concludes the essay. For this purpose and for a better understanding of the context, the research question is referred to.

9.1 Questions and Answers

Sub-question 1: Which are the key points of the current Common Security and Defence Policy between those two Unions?

As listed in chapter 8.1, the key points of this cooperation are

- To reach the announced goals.
- To strengthen the governments.
- To focus on the most important resource, human beings.

These key points do not deal with the current problems; they rather enable Africa to create a better future for the next generations.

Sub-question 2: Which are the strategic ideas of the CSDP?

In combination with other tools of the EU, the CSDP ought to provide a safer world in a specific radius around Europe. Therefore, the Union is responsible for establishing stable governments in this specific area. Stable states go hand in hand with economic welfare. This welfare enables the governments to fight crises in their country and to establish a safe environment which the economic can grow in.

33 Cf.: Ibid. Page 118.

Sub-question 3: Which challenges does the AU have to face in the near future?

Africa has to deal with a major education problem; many of the well educated people leave Africa because there are fewer opportunities than elsewhere abroad. Everyone has his or her own specific expectations. If a person is well educated and an opportunity to enhance one's career pops up, he or she is likely to take it. In order to provide an atmosphere, where a thriving economic system can be established in, a strong and stable government is essential.

Sub-questions 4: Are there fields for improving the current strategy?

The moment one stops improving a strategy, a plan or even one's personality, he or she also stops moving forward. Improving or adopting does not mean to change a working system, it means to optimise it. Although failing seems to have a negative image, it does not mean one has failed to reach their aim. Having tried, often is more worth than not trying at all. There are many fields to work on, but in the author's opinion, both Unions must focus on the following two fields:

- Prevention of new conflicts to reduce emigration.
- Counter terrorism.

These goals are only achievable with strong and stable governments. Therefore, you need a strong partner, in this case the EU, which offers not only financial support but also manpower and information.

What is the best strategic Use of the Common Security and Defence Policy for EU-Africa Relations?

Throughout the previous chapters while answering the sub-questions, some key points appeared. Neither using force to fight terrorists, nor just donating money to the AU is enough. There is much more to do. Every paper or document that was published in the last decades has to be adopted and improved. The current paths are pointing towards productive approaches, but still there is room for improvement and fields, where the EU can optimise and upgrade their efforts. To launch missions and operations is the most necessary tool, because it enables the EU to create a stable government, fight terrorism, and establish a working economic system. In order to achieve this aim, the EU is well-advised to use the existing systems, try to establish a cooperation with the AU, find

African solutions for African problems, and always have the people in the centre of their ambitions.

9.2 Personal Conclusion

To make our continent safer, the EU has to focus on stabilising the surrounding countries. This approach can be compared to security operations, where a Commanding Officer is responsible for creating a safe zone around his objective. The CSDP is an incredible wide-ranging tool. In the author's opinion it is one of the best tools to manage the problems of the present time. The responsible persons continue focussing their ambitions on supporting African efforts to create a better Africa. The CSDP does not have to be replaced, it rather has to be improved, adapted, and continuously cleared from invalid components.

The Austrian government has to evaluate the consequences of the reduction of the defence budget carefully, as it will not only lose military skills, it will lose its international reputation as well. If the Austrian Military is no longer able to participate in EU operations, it will lose its position as one of the world's driving forces in the struggle against humanitarian, political, and governmental emergency situation, as well as its reputation that many brave men and women helped to build over the past decades.

10. Annexes

10.1 List of Abbreviations

AU.....African Union

CSDP.....Common Security and Defence Policy

CPPB.....conflict prevention and peacebuilding

EAS.....European Agency Service

ESDP.....European Security and Defence Policy

EU.....European Union

EUGS.....European Union Global Strategy

EUTM.....European Union Training Mission Mali

GPD.....gross domestic product

MAF.....Mali Armed Forces

PESCO.....Permanent Structured Cooperation

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10.3 List of Literature

10.3.1 Internet

- 1 Homepage of Austrian Armed Forces. Page Mission of the Austrian Armed Forces. Dates and Facts. URL: <http://www.bundesheer.at/ausle/zahlen.shtml>. [22-10-2019].
- 2 Homepage African Union. URL: <https://au.int/>. [18-11-2019].
- 3 Homepage European Union. URL: https://europa.eu/european-union/index_de. [18-11-2019].
- 4 Homepage Wikipedia. Page 1969. URL: <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/1969>. [05-11-2019].

10.3.2 Documents

- 1 African Union & European Union. (2007). The Africa- EU Strategic Partnership. A Joint Africa-EU Strategy. Lisbon.
- 2 African Union & European Union. (2017). Final Declaration AU EU Summit. Investing in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development. Côte d'Ivoire.
- 3 European Union External Action. (2019). Common Security and Defence Policy European Training Mission Mali (EUTM Mali). Brussels. European Union External Action.
- 4 European Union. (2018). Permanent Structured Cooperation – PESCO. Deepening Defence Cooperation among EU Member States. Brussels.
- 5 Mogherini, F. (2016). Shared Visions, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the Europeans Union's Foreign and Security Policy. Brussels.

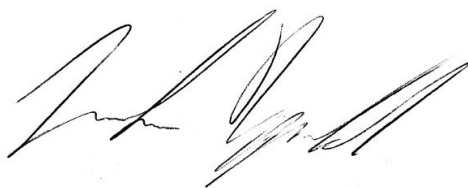
- 6 REHRL, J. (2017). Handbook on CSDP. The Common Security and Defence Policy of the European Union. Vienna. Austrian Armed Forces Printing Centre. ISBN 978-92-95201-04-0. Third Edition.

11. Affidavit

I declare that I have written the present essay independently and on my own. I have clearly marked any language or ideas borrowed from other sources as not my own and documented their sources. The essay does not contain any work that I have handed in or have had graded as a previous scientific paper earlier on.

I am aware that any failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's thoughts or words as if they were my own – even if I summarise, paraphrase, condense, cut, rearrange, or otherwise alter them.

I am aware of the consequences and sanctions plagiarism entails. Among others, consequences may include nullification of the essay, exclusion from participation in the CSDP Olympiad. These consequences also apply retrospectively, i.e. if plagiarism is discovered after the essay has been accepted and graded. I am fully aware of the scope of these consequences.



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(Ocdt Jonathan RAPPOLD)

Wiener Neustadt, Austria in December 2019