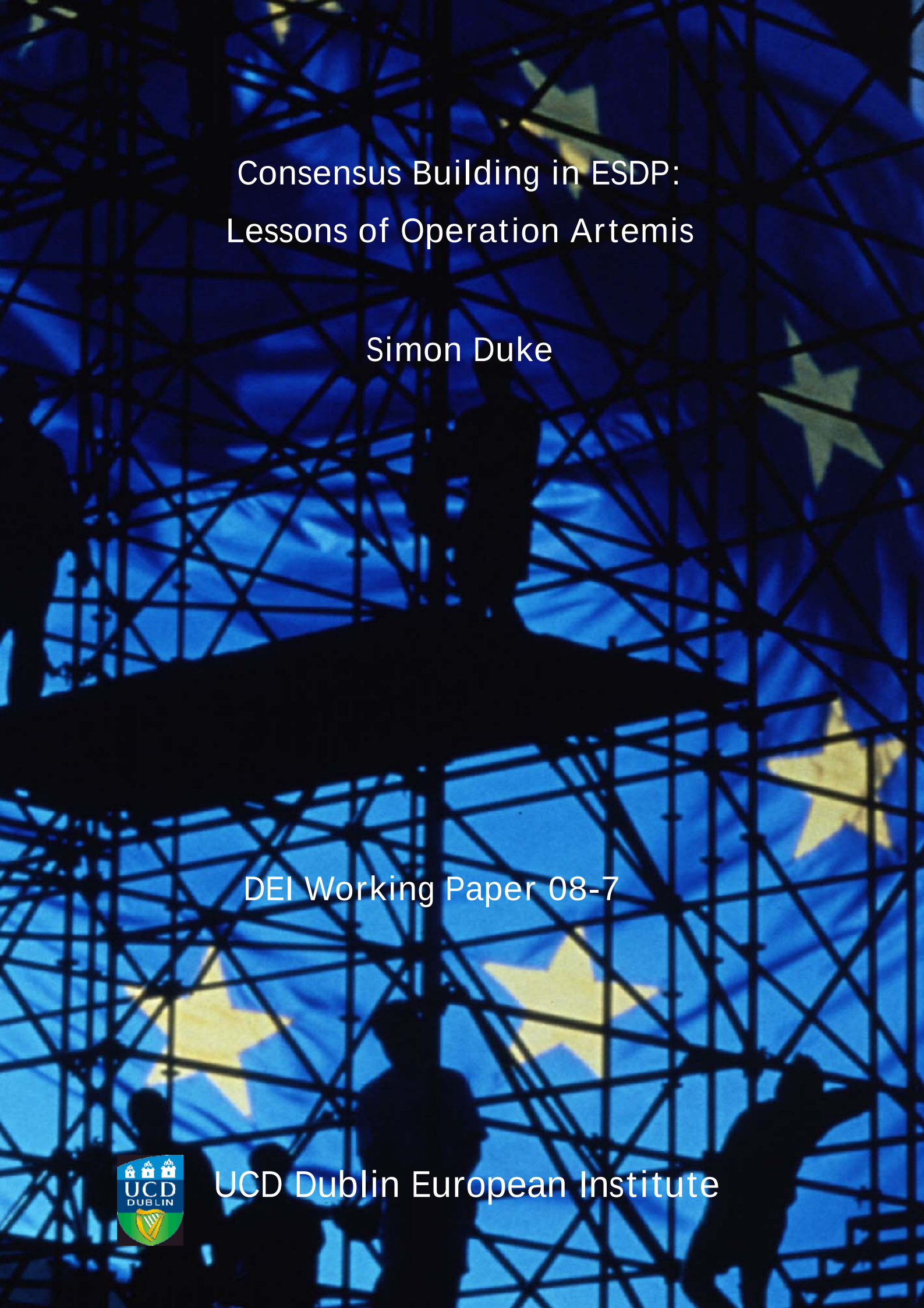

Consensus Building in ESDP: Lessons of Operation Artemis

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Consensus Building in ESDP: The Lessons of Operation Artemis

Abstract

This paper considers how agreement is reached in the area of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) and, just as importantly, how differences are resolved and priorities aligned. The case study, Operation *Artemis* conducted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003, is used to test the key explanatory hypotheses of normative institutionalism. It is argued that normative entrapment did play a significant role, although the cooperative bargaining aspects were significantly modified in this case by the awareness that one larger EU Member State was willing to assume the bulk of the burdens.

Introduction

This case study is designed to examine the central normative institutionalist assertion that decision outcomes can be shaped by institutions which may not be formal structures *per se* but 'collections of interrelated rules and routines that define appropriate action in terms of relations between roles and situations' (Peters, 2001, 28). Under normative institutionalism individual actors do of course make choices, but these are influenced by the prevailing normative values and the collective understanding of 'appropriate' action. With the passage of time, actors begin to associate more closely with the institutions and the values they embody, rather than the normal individual interest maximisation that is typically associated with rational choice approaches. Normative institutionalism therefore posits that the constant shaping of norms and rules by the institutions will shape the decisions made by the actors within them.

In the specific arena of ESDP, normative institutionalism begs the question of what is understood by 'the institutions'. Since it is a highly intergovernmental area, the Member States have a particularly important role to play and it is therefore assumed that

as they meet at different levels (working groups, Coreper, the Political and Security Committee, the General Affairs and External Relations Council) the appropriateness of a given action is shaped and defined. The 'rules' are also extremely important since, in the context of the Treaty on European Union or the principles of the UN Charter, the standards of appropriateness are established as a benchmark for the Member States. Given the highly intergovernmental nature of ESDP, the institutions are relatively weak compared to the more *communautaire* areas of external relations. It is the combination of the 'rules' and the interaction through institutions that decisively shape the options selected by the individual actors.

The case investigation, Operation *Artemis* conducted in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in mid 2003, suggests that the decisions surrounding the operation were largely shaped by normative commitments, both of a general and a more specific nature. Although there were varying degrees of interest in the operation from the individual EU Member States, as well as differences in the physical ability to contribute to the operation, a number of pre-existing norms and commitments shaped their assumption of responsibility for the first wholly independent EU operation. The analysis suggests that normative entrapment was indeed present and shaped decision outcomes. It is argued that the extraordinarily permissive environment surrounding the operation (in particular, the backdrop of the bitter disagreements over Iraq) made the presence of normative entrapment all the more noticeable.

Operation *Artemis* presents weaker support for the decisive presence of competitive bargaining, which would normally lead to a lowest common denominator (LCD) outcome at the EU level. The strongly-norms-led nature of the lead up to the

operation precluded much opportunity for 'hard bargaining', although there is some evidence of this at the national level, most notably in France. Even in this case, however, there was no hint that the French defence ministry would go so far as to obstruct the operation since its overarching political importance was well understood. Although *Artemis* was limited in terms of scope and participation, this should not be misconstrued as a LCD outcome, since the constraints on the operation resulted largely from the remit of the UN mandate and, to a lesser extent, from any decisive intra-EU competitive bargaining.

The article is organised as follows. The first section puts Operation *Artemis* into context, with particular attention to the normative framing of the decision-making environment underpinning it. The second part looks at the origins of *Artemis*, both in terms of the DRC and its neighbours' history but also the existing EU and national interests in the region. The third section considers the challenge from Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, for an interim EU presence and reflects on the factors shaping the French response. This is then followed by an overview of the issues that shaped the agreement of the other principal actors. The actual operation itself is covered *en passant* since it was brief and sandwiched between two UN operations and, by nature, inconclusive. The final section ponders the theoretical implications of the case study. It concludes that, whilst generally supporting the thesis that the normative and policy commitments already made by the Member States had a decisive influence on the decision to prosecute Operation *Artemis*, the particularities of ESDP give rise to some additional and special dynamics which suggests that particular considerations apply to the

general political support for an ESDP operation and the actual physical contributions in the field.

The normative context of Operation Artemis

Normative framing on the French coast

The normative framing of the decisions that led to Operation *Artemis* can be found at both the broad and detailed levels of commitment. At the wide-ranging level, the Treaty on European Union (TEU) advances as one of the objectives of the Common Foreign and Security Policy 'to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union in conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter'. EU members will also seek 'to preserve peace and strengthen international security, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, as well as the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the objectives of the Paris Charter' (TEU, 2002, Article 11). Although there are debates surrounding the specific role and responsibilities of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, the TEU nevertheless establishes a clear normative commitment to the UN Charter and, as we shall see later, became the basis of the expectation that the EU members will live up to their commitments.

The normative foundations of the EU's external action was further reinforced by the European Security Strategy, which although formally adopted after Operation *Artemis*, nevertheless codifies what was already accepted amongst the EU Member States when the draft version was discussed by the European Council in June 2003. The strategy states that, 'The fundamental framework for international relations is the United Nations Charter. The United Nations Security Council has the primary responsibility for the

maintenance of international peace and security. Strengthening the United Nations, equipping it to fulfil its responsibilities and to act effectively, is a *European priority*' (European Security Strategy, 2003, emphasis added).

At the more specific level, France and the United Kingdom had been instrumental in advancing the notion that the EU should play 'its full role in the world' at the St. Malo summit in December 1998. Both agreed, in the form of a declaration, to the development of ESDP in order to respond to the challenges of effective crisis management; the EU's deficiencies in this regard having been made painfully apparent in the Western Balkans where 'US dominance in the face of European military impotence could hardly have been more comprehensive' (Giegrich and Wallace, 2004, 166).

It soon became clear that ESDP was to be framed in more international terms when reference was made at the St. Malo summit to efforts to promote peace and stability in Africa and elsewhere. This was later to find more concrete expression at the Anglo-French summit at Le Touquet in February 2003, whereby 'the potential scope of ESDP should match the world-wide ambition of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy and should be able to support effectively the EU's wider external policy objectives to promote democracy, human rights, good governance and reform.' The resultant declaration also recommended that the parties ought to 'propose to our Partners that the EU should examine how it can contribute to conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa, including through EU autonomous operations, in close co-operation with the United Nations' (Anglo-French Summit, 2003a, Para. 1). The Le Touquet statement also addresses a wide variety of tools for fostering stability in sub-

Saharan Africa, including the need to prevent conflict and/or re-establishing peace, which are 'of constant concern' (Anglo-French Summit, 2003b).

Those who spoke on behalf of the EU and its external relations often referred to Operation *Artemis* in more normative terms that went beyond the exigencies of this particular crisis. For instance, a representative of the Greek Presidency (one of the two Presidencies spanning the operation), addressing the United Nations and speaking on behalf of the EU, said that the 'promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa constitutes one of the major challenges of the international community in the dawn of the 21st century' (Daratzikis, 2003). This evidence suggests an abundant normative 'framing' of the decision-making environment at both the general (the TEU, European Security Strategy) as well as the more specific levels regarding Africa (St Malo and Le Touquet). The normative framing would subsequently shape the policy options considered by the individual EU members, but, just as importantly, it created the expectation from Kofi Annan that the EU would fulfill its commitments.

The policy context

Decisions can be shaped by normative elements and also by policy commitments made in the ESDP context. Four policy commitments, when combined with the aspects above, decisively shaped the decision-making environment. First, Operation *Artemis* was one of four actions undertaken in 2003. The time overlap with one, Operation *Concordia* in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYRoM), would have consequences for *Artemis*. These can be summarised as twofold. First, the willingness to support politically and in material terms an operation in the DRC was partially conditioned by the relative

importance attached to *Concordia* and by the individual resources and personnel tied up in the Balkans. The Copenhagen European Council in December 2002 had already indicated the EU's 'willingness to lead a military operation in Bosnia following SFOR', drawing on NATO assets and capabilities (European Council, 2002). *Concordia*, which was strongly backed by the United Kingdom and the United States, made it more likely that *Artemis* would be framed as a French-backed demonstration of the EU's autonomy in crisis management. The simultaneous nature of Operations *Concordia* and *Artemis* may explain the role of, for instance, Italy and Spain *vis-à-vis Artemis,* both of whose involvement in the Western Balkans may have conditioned their willingness to assume any significant role in the DRC.

The second factor to be taken into account was that *Concordia* was a 'Berlin Plus' operation, meaning that it utilised NATO assets. As the first ESDP military operation, it helped to prove that a partnership between the EU and NATO was possible. Yet *Artemis* was also the result of primarily French pressure to mount a 'Europe only' operation to prove a point about the EU's capabilities in the face of scepticism from Washington and some parts of Europe regarding ESDP. The issue of the EU's autonomy *vis-à-vis* NATO came to the surface at a meeting on 29 April 2003 between the leaders of Belgium, France, Germany and Luxembourg (dubbed, unkindly, the 'Chocolate Summit' by Donald Rumsfeld). At this meeting, the idea of a 'core group,' who might move ahead more rapidly on defence integration, including the possibility of establishing planning and command facilities for the EU in Tervuren, a suburb of Brussels, was advanced. The summit was seen as not only provocative and anti-U.S., since all had opposed the U.S. position on Iraq, but as damaging for NATO. The United Kingdom's 'Food for Thought'

paper was a strong rebuttal of these proposals. In terms of this case study, the spat illustrated the profound difficulties that ESDP could face if the two main underwriters of the policy failed to see alike.

The third aspect that had a strong influence on the shaping of policy towards the DRC was the military intervention in Iraq, which caused bitter divisions in Europe. These divisions supported Operation *Artemis* by demonstrating the EU's autonomy but also by promoting a positive image of the Union's new ESDP. The Greek Defence Minister, Yiannos Papantoniou, was quick to promote *Artemis* as 'very important for the Union' (Papantoniou, 2003). The divisions over Iraq, as well as the experience of operations in the Western Balkans, prompted the drafting of the European Security Strategy in June 2003 and its subsequent adoption by the European Council in December. As argued above, this had the effect of further reinforcing a normative basis for action.

Fourth, the discussions surrounding Operation *Artemis* have been portrayed as an attempt to avoid the marginalization of French foreign policy views, as compared to those of the United Kingdom, in the lead up to enlargement of the EU from 15 to 25 (Club des Vigilants, 2006). Disagreements over Iraq had emphasised differences between the EU members, particularly those who were more pro-U.S. (and NATO) and those who were more pro-Europe. An Anglo-Spanish letter appearing in the *Wall Street Journal Europe* and signed by eight European leaders supported the U.S. position on military intervention in Iraq. The letter was supplemented soon thereafter by support from the Vilnius Ten. In the lead-up to Operation *Artemis*, France was far more careful in involving the candidates and seeking, and receiving, their support. Such approval was in marked contrast to the

high-handed dismissal of the candidates by Chirac in the prelude to military intervention in Iraq.

The respective national decisions to contribute to Operation *Artemis* were therefore shaped by the confluence of the four inter-related considerations: the normative commitments undertaken in the EU context as well as the UN setting; the need to demonstrate a stand-alone capability at the European-level to contrast with the heavy dependence on NATO (and the United States) in the Western Balkans; the bitter divisions caused by Iraq made the need to demonstrate that the EU could live up to its responsibilities in the global arena a pressing concern and; finally, the prospect of an enlarged EU necessitated a more comprehensive and strategic response to the EU's role in the world.

The origins of Operation Artemis

Conflict had been endemic to the Ituri since 1999 with sporadic clashes between local, national and regional players over questions of land ownership and hence rights to natural resources. The DRC was of more than passing interest to a number of European companies especially since it became an oil producer in the mid 1970s (Petrofina, TotalFinaElf, Shell and others were all present onshore and, in some cases, offshore). The greatest wealth, however, lay in the extensive mineral riches including diamonds (representing over half of the DRC's exports), cobalt/copper and uranium.

The conflict also had a regional dimension since the shifting alliances in Ituri involved Rwanda and Uganda. In 1996-1997, both countries supported the *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (ADFL), which opposed Joseph

Mobutu Sese Seko. In May 1997, Mobutu was overthrown by Laurent Kabila who, in turn, was confronted by a Rwandan-Ugandan backed rebellion the following year. The first UN involvement was in August 1999, when 90 peacekeepers were deployed to promote the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement reached earlier in that year. The agreement, signed between the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Uganda and Zimbabwe, rapidly fell apart necessitating an increase in the UN presence to almost 2,000 in February 2000 and, eventually to 8,700 in 2003, just prior to the EU presence. The Lusaka peace agreement was thrown into further disarray following Kabila's assassination in January 2001. Joseph Kabila then succeeded his father, Laurent.

The Pretoria Agreement, between the DRC and Rwanda, was signed on 30 July 2002 and, on 6 September 2002, the Luanda Agreement between the DRC and Uganda. Under the latter, the withdrawal of the Ugandan forces was scheduled to take place following the establishment of a peace-building strategy by the Ituri Pacification Committee (IPC), which was composed of representatives of the various Ituri communities, militias and civil society groups. The occupying Rwandan and Ugandan forces subsequently withdrew from the eastern parts of the country in October 2002. Shortly thereafter, in December, all parties agreed to form a government of national unity, which was eventually installed in July 2003.

The IPC met in April under the supervision of the *Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo* (MONUC), which provided a road map for reconciliation and an interim administration. However, the plans soon went awry with the eruption of further violence in Ituri in May 2003, following the withdrawal of Ugandan troops who had provided much of the order and a semblance of stability in the District.

Lendu militias (backed by Kinshasa) and the Hema-dominated (and Rwandan backed) Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) systematically slaughtered and raped civilians, while Hema-dominated militias seized Bunia in mid-May while Lendu militias terrorized the surrounding countryside. The Hema-Lendu conflict included an economic dimension as both fought for control over land and natural resources.

The situation confronting the international community in 2003 was already grave, with an estimated 500,000 displaced people and up to 60,000 killed in Ituri alone. As a result of the deteriorating situation, thousands fled Bunia with many heading to the airport where a Uruguayan battalion had established its base as the MONUC sector 2 headquarters. The 712 Uruguayan troops had arrived in Bunia in April 2003 and were few compared to the Ugandan and local forces. The inability of MONUC to protect the civilian population as well as the rapid withdrawal of the Ugandan troops, contributed to spiralling violence in May 2003. Amnesty International commented on MONUC's role: 'Hamstrung by a weak mandate, and often lacking personnel, equipment and the necessary international political support, MONUC's performance fell well short of what was needed in terms of civilian protection' (Amnesty International, 2003, 18).

The EU had followed developments in the DRC and, more generally the Great Lakes Region, with a measure of concern for a number of years. The Union was closely involved in efforts to reach a peaceful settlement to the ongoing conflict since 1996, including through the efforts of the Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, Aldo Ajello (Council of the European Union, 2002). The EU was also instrumental in underwriting support for the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement of 10 July 1999 and later the *Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo* and the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la*

Democratie. There were several subsequent EU expressions of concern at developments in the DRC, including a common position of 8 May 2003 calling for the observance of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (Council of the European Union, 2003a).

Annan's challenge

On 13 May, two UN military observers were murdered in Mongbwalu. Two days later Kofi Annan addressed a letter to the President of the UN Security Council calling for the 'rapid deployment to Bunia of a highly trained and well-equipped multinational force, under the lead of a Member State, to provide security at the airport as well as to other vital installations in the town and to protect the civilian population.' He further stipulated that, 'The force would be deployed for a limited period until a considerably reinforced United Nations presence could be deployed' (Annan, 2003a). The letter also made it apparent that any such force would be authorised under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. The authorisation came in the form of UN Security Council Resolution 1484, calling for the 'deployment of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force [IEMF] in Bunia in close cooperation with MONUC' (United Nations Security Council, 2003 p. #). The resolution further made it clear that the IEMF would be deployed on a 'strictly temporary basis' to allow the Secretary-General to reinforce MONUC's presence in Bunia by mid-August 2003. The deployment of the IEMF would last until 1 September.

In response to the worsening situation in Bunia and elsewhere in the Ituri district and Annan's request, the Council requested the Secretary-General/High Representative on 19 May 2003 to study the feasibility of an EU operation in the DRC. The initial request for assistance led to the dispatch of nine French army officers to Bunia and

Kinshasa to assess the types of force requirements needed to address the ongoing violence. The assessment, delivered to Javier Solana, the Political and Security Committee and the Military Committee, concluded that any operation would be 'high risk' in political and military terms as well as 'sensitive and complex' (Astill, 2003). Perhaps unsurprisingly, Solana's main focus at the time was the Western Balkans and the rapidly worsening situation in Iraq; in public Solana made 'no attempt to highlight African security challenges, and reaffirmed that the DRC was not on the EU's "CFSP public radar" at the time' (Hendrickson *et al*., 2007, 41). This strongly suggests that the early French commitment to lead the operation resulted in Annan's appeal to Solana to build consensus amongst the EU members.

The relatively short, yet significant, gap between the feasibility visit and the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1484 allowed France to contribute to the shaping of the mission after 'difficult debates among [the] French army's Heads of Staff' (Amnesty International, 2003, 8). For the French military, the acceptability of the mission lay in part upon the mandate being limited in terms of scope (primarily to make the airport safe and to protect Bunia) and time (until 1 September 2003). It was also agreed that, as a pre-condition, any operation would have to be granted a UN Chapter VII mandate and that the intervention force would have the official support of the DRC, Rwanda and Uganda.

By the time the UN Secretary-General formally requested the UN Member States on 30 May 2003 to provide a temporary stabilisation force in the Ituri district, the feasibility of an EU operation had already been established. The Joint Action to launch Operation *Artemis* was agreed to on 5 June 2003 and, one day later, the first detachment

of some 100 troops from a French marine infantry regiment arrived in Bunia (Council of the European Union, 2003b).[1] The timing would suggest that the political decision, made in the form of a CFSP Joint Action, was something of a formality since it was based upon an existing UN mandate and a direct request for assistance from the UN Secretary-General. The Joint Action was nevertheless of twofold importance since it assured '*une indéniable légitimité*' on the operation and convinced a number of Member States, who otherwise had no strong interest in western Central Africa, to lend their support (Bagayoko, 2004, 103). The plan of operations was adopted by the Council shortly thereafter on 12 June. The only significant points of debate were a number of changes by Sweden and the United Kingdom to the operational plan, reflecting their concerns about 'child soldiers' (Faria, 2004, 49).

By 18 June, 400 soldiers were on the ground in Bunia and 500 more in Entebbe and, by 6 July, all military forces had been deployed. The intervention force was officially called the *Force Multinationale Interimaire d'Urgence* (or the Interim Emergence Multinational Force, IMEF) with the code name *Artemis*, deploying from 6 June to 7 September 2003. The headquarters (OHQ) were located at the *Centre de planification et de contrôle des opérations* (CPCO) near Paris. It was composed of CPCO officers, along with officers from other participating states and liaison officers from the EU Military Staff. Major General Bruno Neveux was appointed as EU Operation Commander while Brigadier General Jean-Paul Thonier was EU Force Commander.

The forward elements deployed to Bunia were soon complemented by engineers whose primary mission was to repair and maintain the airfield which was critical to the support and logistics of the operation. The total force of 1,800 was divided into roughly

equal portions between Entebbe/Uganda, the force headquarters and the remainder in Bunia; over half of the forces being French. The Bunia-based forces secured the airport and enforced the ban on any 'visible arms', while the Entebbe-based forces provided logistics and medical support.[2] Air support, reconnaissance and surveillance were provided by French air assets at Ndjamena and Entebbe—the latter being the location of the in-region headquarters. In addition to France, the United Kingdom and Sweden contributed troops while Belgium and Germany provided non-combat soldiers. Seven countries contributed headquarters staff (Austria, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal and Spain). Non-EU contributors included Brazil, Canada and South Africa.[3]

The presence of predominantly French-speaking troops had some obvious advantages, such as the ability to communicate with the local population. The presence of French and Swedish special forces (around 150 and 70-80 respectively) also had the effect of giving the IMEF the ability to address threats beyond the immediate confines of Bunia (but only up to around 40 kilometres and, even then, only for sporadic forets). The ultimate verdict of IMEF's success depended largely upon the prospects of any longer-term stability under MONUC. The 'weapons invisible zone' had a number of positive effects but it also moved the violence beyond Bunia where atrocities continued unabated. It is also possible that IMEF's limited and well publicised duration, limited its real effectiveness. Nevertheless Bunia, whose normal population was around 200,000, was around 45,000 at the launch of Artemis and it had climbed to around 100,000 as of September. Perhaps a bigger measure of success was the resumption of market trading in August.

Negotiations

As evidenced, Kofi Annan's request was to the international community but specifically to France. The task of shaping consensus in the EU context was heavily influenced by both the general and specific normative framing (see above) that enabled Annan to approach France with a reasonable expectation of a positive response. Consensus on what became Operation *Artemis* was shaped both at the Member State level as well as within the individual Member States. In the latter category none was more important than France in determining the nature and scope of the response. In order to understand the negotiating process one must first unravel the factors shaping the French response to Annan's request.

At a relatively early stage of planning, the *Cellule Africaine de l'Elysée* proposed that the operation should take place under the EU's aegis.[4] Prior to this, the *Cellule* had been approached by the International Crisis Group (ICG), which had dispatched representatives to New York and to Paris to voice its concerns about the potential for genocide—a particularly evocative word in the normative lexicon. The IGC suggested to Chirac, via the *Cellule*, the possibility of some form of multilateral intervention. Chirac, who hoped for an opportunity to launch a 'Europe only' mission, saw this as a good opportunity (Lavallée, 2006, 12). The *Cellule's* weak repute led to early promotion of an active role in the DRC as a way of salvaging something of its tarnished reputation (Banégas et al. 2007; Aït-Hatrit, 2007; *Commission d'enquête citoyenne*, 2004). French leadership in this particular case was also consistent with past policies whereby the government actively supported the deployment of a UN-backed peacekeeping force in the DRC. France had also contributed to MONUC in the eastern part of the country.

On a more geo-strategic level, Niagalé Bagayoko has also suggested that Operation *Artemis* offered France a chance to re-establish a foothold in the Great Lakes region, and more generally central Africa. French influence had been waning since the 1994 Operation *Turquoise* in Rwanda. *Turquoise* was widely viewed as a biased and humiliating retreat of the French presence from the Central African Republic (Bagayoko, 2004, 104). Defence Minister François Léotard complained at the time that France had been left alone to deal with Rwanda (a criticism directed particularly at Germany) and that these sensitivities meant that France was anxious to frame any future operation in the DRC in a strictly multinational framework (*Le Monde*, 5 July 1994). The French Presidency of the G8 provided another platform for France to prioritise African affairs.The Côte d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe and the Great Lakes region were all highlighted in a meeting between Dominique de Villepin and his counterpart, Jack Straw, in October 2002 (Ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2002).

The normative basis for the EU' developing crisis management role had been laid out at St Malo, whereby the Union should have the 'capacity for autonomous action', notwithstanding any support for the strengthening of the European pillar of NATO. Arguably, the latter was demonstrated on several occasions in the Western Balkans, while the former had not. Hence, according to François Grignon the decision to intervene under the EU aegis lay in the 'political weight [*Artemis*] could have to prove the value of an EU military capability for peace-keeping' (Grignon 2003, 4). The *loi de programmation militaire* for 2003-8, presented by French Defence Minister Michèle Alliot-Marie in September 2002, also shows that ESDP is 'une ambition pour la France, pour l'Europe'

(Programmation Militaire, 2003). French ambitions in this regard are 'equivalent to those of Europe' (Rieker, 2006, 522).

The third component in French policy was the role of the UN. Since Annan viewed the military intervention against Iraq as no less than 'illegal', France was the logical choice to turn to for assistance (Annan, 2003b). France was able to strengthen the normative basis for the operation while at the same time, France's strong support of the UN strengthened the UN's image, which had been damaged by the Iraq imbroglio. Dominique de Villepin, was effusive in his support of the organisation when he observed that it is the UN 'that will be tomorrow at the centre of the peace' and that 'in this temple of the United Nations' the members are 'the guardians of the ideal, the guardians of a conscience' (De Villepin 2003). Naturally, such rhetorical appeals had a ready constituency in the EU, reflecting not only the treaty-based importance attached to the UN, but also the need to rebuild and restore confidence in the organisation following the differences over Iraq.

From the French perspective, Operation *Artemis* therefore offered the possibility of combining elements of national interest (and prestige), with the strengthening of ESDP, and the resuscitation of the UN. A grasp of the French policy background on this issue is critical to the understanding of the behaviour of other EU Member States, especially bearing in mind that any use of military force under the TEU requires unanimity. If one considers the three levels outlined above — national, European, international — the positions of other key EU Member States are fairly straightforward. First, the question of supporting French national interest was secondary to the offer of French military support for Operation *Artemis* as the designated 'framework nation'. The

concept had been endorsed by the Council on 24 July 2002 as the conceptual basis for conducting autonomous operations with recourse to a Framework Nation; the assumption being that the designated member should be in a position to play for and prepare for the deployment of an ESDP operation. The limited number of Member States with the capacity to underpin such a mission meant that the French offer was generally welcome as a means of reaching commonly held normative goals. Other larger Member States made less than ideal 'framework nations' on political grounds since Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom all supported the governments in Uganda and Rwanda. In 2003, the United Kingdom still had close relations with Rwanda, which again suggests that it was not the obvious candidate to assume leadership of a possible EU military operation. France, by way of contrast, had historically close relations with much of Africa but, with reference to the DRC, this was not based on any colonial past, nor any extensive economic interests. It was, according to an official French Foreign Ministry website, a special relationship founded in particular on the French language connection that 'caused France to play a leading role in supporting the peace process, and, specifically, supporting the national transition processes' (Ministère des Affaires étrangères, 2008). While competition with Belgium in the economic field cannot be ruled out as a factor shaping French policy, French interests in the DRC were more likely to have been spurred by considerations of the 'francophonie' in Africa, with the DRC as the largest francophone country on the continent. The language issue had already featured in the MONUC context with French hostility towards the prominent British, and thus Anglophone, role in the mission.

The care France took to frame its interests in a multilateral context also alleviated any concerns that this was solely a French operation in EU guise. The traditional differences between France and a number of its NATO allies did not come to the fore since NATO has few strategic interests in Africa, whereas the EU does. The African context was therefore important since it allowed the symbolic gesture to be made, but in an environment that was not overtly politicised for the U.S. or the Alliance. It is also worth noting that the EU's framework nation concept was modelled very closely on NATO and may have thus had a reassuring effect on any who suspected neo-Gaullist sub-plots.

The desire to promote Europe's global role, especially in juxtaposition to the international role of the U.S. in Iraq, explains much of the motivation behind Belgian, German and Swedish support for France's 'framework nation' role. The French desire to demonstrate a greater European presence on the international stage, also drew support from the EU Presidency. Papantoniou, the Greek defence minister, shared the view that *Artemis* could be a politically useful demonstration of the Union's autonomy (Hendrickson et al, 2007, 40). According to General Neveux, Chirac's swift political decision to make France the framework nation (in spite of military misgivings) was an effort to demonstrate the Union's 'ability to respond, [and] its military capability to very quickly engage in an operation', (Lobjakas, 2003). The French arguments about the need to display some form of 'Europe only' capability resonated with the General Affairs and External Relations Council, which concluded that the operation would provide 'further tangible evidence of the development of the European security and defence policy and of the European Union's contribution to the international community's efforts to promote

stability and security in Africa' (General Affairs and External Relations Council, 2003, 16).

Germany was initially cautious about *Artemis*, which was in part a reflection of the traditional political nervousness about contributing to combat operations, as well as doubts about whether this should really be an EU operation. According to Ståle Ukriksen *et al*. (2004, 513-514) the German Foreign Minister, Joshka Fischer, came under direct British and French pressure to back Operation *Artemis*. Alister Miskimmon suggests that Chancellor Schröder's highly public rejection of the Bush administration's plans to invade Iraq led to 'actively distancing Germany from America's foreign policy position and actively allying with France and Russia against Bush's plan' (Miskimmon, 2006, 3). The Iraq crisis not only meant that Germany had given up its traditional middle ground in transatlantic and European affairs, but that it had surrendered much of its influence within the Union as a 'balancer'. One of the options to regain influence was therefore to emphasise Franco-German relations in external relations. Germany's political backing was facilitated by the fact that both France and the United Kingdom explicitly sought EU endorsement for the operation. However, Germany's actual contribution remained limited in terms of exposure, with the provision of 350 medical and logistical personnel stationed in Uganda to provide support for the main peace-keeping effort.

The United Kingdom's position was particularly difficult, given its heavy military commitments elsewhere. The origins of ESDP, with France and the United Kingdom at its core, meant that any French mission without the support and preferably involvement of the United Kingdom would have lacked credibility. Initially, the United Kingdom did not wish to be involved, but Blair had previously outlined a strong position on the use of

force in humanitarian intervention in 1999 at the time of the United Kingdom's intervention in Kosovo (Gegout 2005, 438-9). Although the United Kingdom was engaged, its involvement was highly symbolic and value-laden but had the positive effects of, on the one hand, upholding its stance on intervention for humanitarian reasons (even if only in a support role) and, on the other hand, bolstering the commitments made at St. Malo to the development of ESDP.

Belgium's role, as the former colonial overseer, was discreet yet active behind the scenes.[5] Any consideration of a more vigorous role in military terms was largely circumscribed by Belgian political nervousness about unilateral military involvement in former colonies after the death of ten Belgian troops in Kigali in 1994.As the result of a parliamentary enquiry subsequent to this event, it was agreed in a legislative document that Belgium ought not send combat forces (*troupes de combat*) for active military service to former colonies (Sénat et Chambre des représentants de Belgique, 1998, 6-7). Belgium nevertheless provided transport and medical support and also made intelligence resources available to the mission

Theoretical implications of Operation Artemis

Normative Entrapment and Cooperative Bargaining

The complex normative basis is a key explanatory variable in explaining the decisions underpinning Operation *Artemis.* The extent of the normative commitments, ranging from the TEU and its invocation of the UN Charter, to the more specific commitments made at St Malo and Le Touquet, all created the expectation of support, if not actual physical involvement. It should also be borne in mind that the political environment in the spring

of 2003 was extraordinarily normatively permissive, largely due to the ructions over Iraq, which enhanced and possibly exaggerated the impact of normative associations.

It would therefore have been difficult for any EU member to adopt a 'no action' position (with the specific exception of Denmark), especially since the interim EU mission was described by Annan himself as an act of humanitarian intervention. Even if individual Member States, such as Germany or the United Kingdom, did not find the humanitarian intervention argument wholly convincing, they were prepared to accept the normative dialogue for other compelling political reasons, such as the need to demonstrate a measure of autonomy from NATO and the United States in light of the bitter disagreements over Iraq, or to demonstrate the capacity for autonomous action of ESDP.

The EU Member States, prompted by France and the United Kingdom, had also made bold policy commitments at St. Malo, which meant that *Artemis* was as much about shaping the EU's global role as it was about strengthening the relatively new ESDP. The framing of primarily Anglo-French interests, as well as those of former colonial powers in Africa, as 'European' interests did not meet substantive objections from other EU members or even the candidates, most of whom expressed support. Even those countries that had no apparent direct interest in Africa, such as Ireland or Luxembourg, did so partially out of normative entrapment but also on the expectation that such entrapment would, at a later date, be repaid.

The deliberate framing of the proposed military action in the DRC, both in terms of the EU's formal norms and policy commitments, but also through the invocation of wider international regimes (such as those of the UN Charter), suggests that a strong

element of normative entrapment was present—aided and abetted by the permissive normative environment in Europe following the disagreements over Iraq.

Cooperative bargaining offers a second, but less compelling, hypothesis to explain the emergence of the June 2003 Joint Action (as outlined in XXXX 2008, --). With reference to European Political Cooperation (EPC), CFSP's predecessor, Simon Nuttal noted the presence of an 'automatic reflex of consultation' that gradually modified the way in which Member States acted in the foreign and security policy domains from EPC onwards (Nuttall, 1992, 312). As has been pointed out elsewhere, the disagreements over Iraq demonstrated a spectacular breakdown of any such reflex (even though, technically, it was not portrayed as a matter of 'general interest' under Article 16 of the Treaty on European Union and thus not subject to CFSP deliberation).

Thus the cooperative bargaining thesis is weakened to an extent by the peculiarities of this case and the specifics of ESDP. The *foreknowledge* that France had volunteered to be the framework nation for what became Operation *Artemis* had two possible effects. First, it diminished the desire of the Member States to reach dramatically diverse positions (delimited anyway by the normative environment) since political support for EU action in the DRC did not necessarily imply a physical contribution to any ensuing operation as this is always determined on a national case-by-case basis. In this sense, the early emergence of the French as the main provider for the operation not only facilitated agreement, but obviated the need for hard bargaining positions that might otherwise have emerged if there was a potential direct link between political support and physical involvement.

Subsequent EU operations, such as the 2008 EURFOR Chad/RCA mission, paint a slightly different picture. The Chad operation is also a bridging mission over a sizeable area with considerable logistical challenges. It was originally designed to be launched in November 2007 but was delayed because of well publicised difficulties getting the EU members to supply the required resources. Of the 3,500 troops who will be deployed, the majority (2,100) are once again French, with significant contributions from Ireland (who has the command) and Poland. The main issue was to generate the necessary assets to cover the 200,000 square kilometre operational area. Like *Artemis*, the normative entrapment arguments are compelling and perhaps even more so given the media coverage and harrowing images of events in Darfur. Unlike *Artemis*, the presence of significant shortfalls highlighted the danger of the potential for 'hollow' commitments in those situations where a clear framework nation had yet to emerge. This points to the need to look carefully at not only the consensus behind the political decision to launch an operation, but also at whether any normative entrapment follows through to the operational level.

Alternative approaches

The above account offers an explanation of Operation *Artemis* drawing primarily on a normative institutionalist perspective. An alternative explanation is the competitive bargaining approach, which is perhaps the most realist oriented of the explanations. This would reduce *Artemis* to a lowest common denominator decision, based on competitive bargaining and threatened or actual veto usage. The logic of this approach suggests that since France was willing to provide the bulk of the personnel and logistics, the choice for

other EU members was stark: either block France or sign on the dotted line to an essentially French operation under EU guise. Catherine Gegout has been the strongest advocate of this position, arguing explicitly that Operation *Artemis* represented a lowest common denominator policy, or a French initiative masquerading as a 'European initiative' (Gegout 2005).

The ability to underwrite an ESDP operation might appear to give a handful of Member States undue influence and scope for coercive bargaining or entrapment. It may also appear to suggest that the defence of norms and values depends upon the whims of a handful of members. In the case of Operation *Artemis* it could be argued that the strong French interest and operational capacity shaped EU norms and muscled less able (or interested) EU members into backing the operation. Less able Member States may also have been dissuaded from hard bargaining, or even exercising a veto, by the knowledge that France could have mounted a unilateral operation with a UN mandate. Such a move would have weakened the EU at a time when it was anxious to demonstrate unity and cohesion rather than the individualism and dissonance that had been displayed over Iraq. One conclusion might therefore be that, aside from the normative veneer, French actions in particular were of a rational choice nature.

Such realist-inspired arguments fail to account for the particularly strong normative environment in which the decisions about *Artemis* were made. All were aware of their UN-based obligations; all were aware of the high stakes for the EU if the fledgling ESDP was seen as circumscribed; and all were aware of the necessity for the EU to be a more visible presence on the international stage in the aftermath of the bitter disagreements over Iraq. There is simply little evidence of competitive bargaining and,

even if not all were behaving entirely altruistically, the discussions and eventual Joint Action were framed in normative terms.

A realist approach would tend to deal with ESDP operations as distinct events, each fuelled by its own competitive dynamics. But this fails to explain why *Artemis* (in combination with the early lessons from the disagreements over Iraq) resulted in far more cooperation at the European level (an 'enhanced reflex' to put it in Nuttall's terms). Collaboration in the development of the European Security Strategy (ESS), the battlegroups concept and other various forms of enhanced cooperation in the ESDP context, are all attributable to the lessons gleaned from ESDP operations in 2003, including *Artemis*. In other words, *Artemis* cannot be seen as an isolated event but as part of a more complex policy learning process that contributed to the rapid development of ESDP with the support of the EU Member States.

The argument above may seem to support the policy-learning hypothesis and indeed there is some credence to this. This approach however assumes that the learning process does not affect or transform the fundamental properties of the actors involved. The chain of events set into motion by the Iraq case, *Artemis* and other ESDP operations suggest that a transformational 'process' was at work, as has just been suggested with the development of the ESS, the Battlegroup Concept and, more recently, the EU-Africa strategy.

In a similar vein, the explanatory power of the normative suasion approach is limited. The distinction between 'suasion' and 'entrapment' hinges upon whether normative arguments are provoked by an argumentative process between Member States *during* the policy formulation process, as opposed to the conditioning of the same process

by *previously* adopted normative policy positions. The case study suggests that previously adopted norms and policies had a strong role in shaping the decision outcome. There is little to suggest any serious normative competition, with the exception of the concerns voiced by Sweden and the United Kingdom regarding 'child soldiers'. Even in this instance, there is nothing to suggest that this had a major impact on the enabling Joint Action that launched the operation.

Conclusions: Is ESDP distinct?

The evidence from the *Artemis* case suggests that normative entrapment operated at two levels: first, the general and specific normative statements articulated in EU documents and within the institutions, made it hard to ignore the collective rhetorical commitments and; second, France's role as one of the principal shapers of the normative environment created a reasonable expectation that it would respond as the 'framework nation'. The levels therefore illustrate normative convergence as well as rhetorical entrapment at work.

In this particular investigation, the 'logic of appropriateness' was put into unusually stark relief by the preceding disagreements over Iraq. The highly permissive normative environment surrounding Operation *Artemis* may well have been unusual but, even if an'extreme' case, it nevertheless supports the pertinence of normative institutionalism to this particular instance. More recent cases, like the 2008 EUFOR Chad/RCA mission, may well suggest a far more nuanced conclusion.

The possible distinctiveness of ESDP lies in the complicated two-level decision-making required to launch a crisis management operation. First, the political decision (a

CFSP Joint Action), which is made at the level of the foreign ministers in the Council, and then, second, the national decisions to release the necessary assets to the responsible EU command structure for the duration of the operation. The growth in the number of ESDP operations and the increasing external demand for EU assistance could be perceived as a measure of the deep normative foundations of CFSP. In most operations the number of personnel or resources involved is modest. In these cases, the potential dissonance between the normative convergence and the actual availability of personnel and resources is not of great concern. It remains an open question whether the normative entrapment dimension was strengthened by the limited time and scope of Operation *Artemis*. Had *Artemis* concluded the EU's active engagement in the DRC, this would have significantly undermined normative coherence that underpinned the operation and could even have made it appear a rather self-serving, and even cynical, involvement. To the EU's credit, Operation *Artemis* was just the beginning of ESDP involvement in the DRC.

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Notes

[1] Due to its opt out on all defence-related provisions on the Treaty on European Union, Denmark did not participate in the decision or the financing and implementation of Operation *Artemis*.

[2] Bunia and a ten kilometer zone around the town was declared a 'weapons invisible zone' as per the peace accords. Special forces were used to help enforce the zone around Bunia.

[3] The force consisted of around 1,000 personnel in the Operational Headquarters, and a similar number on the ground in Bunia. The vast majority of forces were French, as were most of the 400 or so combat vehicles, with the United Kingdom and Sweden contributing around 100 and 70 respectively. The UK forces were primarily engineers and medics while the Swedish contribution was special forces. In addition Belgium sent 48 medical and logistical personnel who were located in Uganda, primarily with transportation responsibilities. Germany provided around 350 troops, again in Uganda, who gave logistical and medical support to the main force.

[4] The *Cellule Africaine de l'Elysée* is a body with no official legal standing and is best described as an informal body, composed of diplomatic and military advisors, to oversee French interests in Africa.
[5] The five permanent members of the UN Security Coucil, plus Belgium, Canada and South Africa, formed the Comité International d'Accompagnement à la Transition (CAT) whose task was to support the transitional government and encourage further progress.