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## **Introduction**

This special issue is the outcome of an international workshop entitled “Contending Issues of Global Governance” held in Istanbul on 24 October 2019 and organized by the Department of International Relations, Marmara University. In organizing such an event, our primary purpose was to theoretically question and analytically address the problems of global governance concerning several actors and issues.

Research on Global governance is hardly new. Since James Rosenau and Ernst Czempiel’s study *Governance without Government* was published in 1992, global governance studies have grown vastly. To better understand the global complexity of actors and issues, the term has been ever-popular among academicians and policy-makers since the 1990s. However, the 2000s marked by rapid transformation in the distribution of the West’s economic and political power, accompanied by the proliferation of new actors, and their institutions in global governance. In this regard, rising powers have become more willing and vocal to extend their participation, norms, and influence in global governance bodies. In light of these rapid changes, global governance grows ever more complicated and fragmented, incorporating cross-cutting old and newly emerging formal and informal institutions, actors, and pressing global issues. Most recently, the problems of various global governance mechanisms have become a more heated debate with the Covid-19 pandemic.

In this context, this special issue brings together articles on several actors of global governance such as rising/middle powers, the EU, the UN, non-state actors, as well as crucial issues such as climate change, crisis management, development cooperation, women, peace and security. Thus, the collection offers a comprehensive outlook on the contending issues of global governance. Furthermore, the issue and actor specific perspectives provided in this special issue help better understand several commonalities and differences of global governance mechanisms. Thus, we hope that by dealing with several actors/issues at the global and regional level, this collection of articles will help further the debate on the strengths and weaknesses of established and emerging global governance bodies at a time of rapid change.

### **Special Issue Editors**

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## China's Relationship with the Liberal International Order: The Case of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

### Çin'in Liberal Uluslararası Düzen ile İlişkisi: Asya Altyapı Yatırım Bankası Üzerinden Bir İnceleme

Altay ATLI\* 

Zeynepcan AKAR\*\* 

#### Abstract

As the world enters the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the liberal international order founded in the aftermath of the Second World War and has since provided a framework within which world affairs take place, is experiencing a crisis of sustainability, because while on the one hand the Western world that has created the system is going through a period where its own liberal values and norms are eroding, on the other hand the very order has not been able to accommodate the rise of non-Western powers most of which are governed by authoritarian regimes. One of these powers, China, merits greater attention, not only because it has reached the status of a global economic behemoth seeking to making rules rather than taking them by becoming an integral part of the system rather than conflicting it, but also because there is an inherent paradox to its relationship with the liberal international order: China has benefited from the liberal international order for its economic rise, yet at the same time this rise is also said to be a challenge against the very order itself. In an attempt to tackle this paradox, this essay focuses on an institutional form of this country's involvement in the governance of the international economic order, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a Chinese-led multinational development bank that commenced operations in 2016, and investigates whether AIIB complements the structures of the existing order or aims to substitute them, in order to contribute to a better understanding of China's relationship liberal international order.

**Keywords:** China, Liberal International Order, Global Governance, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Multilateral Development Banks.

#### Öz

Dünya 21. Yüzyıl'ın üçüncü on yılına girerken, İkinci Dünya Savaşı sonrasında kurulan ve bugüne değin dünya meselelerini şekillendiren bir çerçeve oluşturan liberal uluslararası düzenin bir sürdürülebilirlik krizi yaşamakta olduğu görülmektedir ve bunun da sebebi olarak bir taraftan söz konusu düzenin kurucusu olan Batı dünyasında liberal değer ve normlar zayıflamakta iken diğer yandan mevcut düzenin çoğu otoriter rejimler tarafından yönetilmekte olan Batı-dışı güçlerin yükselişi karşısında yetersiz kalması gösterilmektedir. Bu güçlerden biri olan Çin'in yakından incelenmesi gerekir, çünkü

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bu ülke günümüzde küresel düzeyde kural yapıcı konumuna ulaşmak isteyen büyük bir ekonomik güç seviyesine bu düzenin dışında kalarak veya bu düzenle çatışarak değil, söz konusu düzenin bütüncül bir parçası olarak geldiği gibi, liberal uluslararası düzenden fayda sağladığı halde yükselişi ile bu düzene karşı bir tehdit oluşturduğu gibi söylemlere de hedef olarak bir paradoks da yaratmaktadır. Söz konusu paradoksu inceleyen bu makalenin amacı, Çin'in uluslararası ekonomik düzen ile ilişkisinin kurumsal bir formu olan, 2016'da faaliyetlerine başlayan çok taraflı kalkınma bankası Asya Altyapı Yatırım Bankası'nın (AIIB) ele alarak bu bankanın mevcut düzeni tamamlayıcı mı olduğunu yoksa bu düzeni değiştirme amacı mı taşıdığını sorgulayarak bu suretle Çin'in liberal uluslararası düzenle olan ilişkisini anlama çabalarına bir katkı sunmaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çin, Liberal Uluslararası Düzen, Küresel Yönetişim, Asya Altyapı Yatırım Bankası, Çok Taraflı Kalkınma Bankaları.

## 1. Introduction

Chinese president Xi Jinping's speech at the World Economic Forum summit in the Swiss town of Davos in January 2017, where he made a case for the world to “remain committed to developing global free trade and investment, promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation through opening-up and say no to protectionism” (State Council, 2017), was hailed by many as an indication of China becoming “*the* responsible global citizen” (italics added by the authors) and taking over “the role of defending the global trading system in the teeth of protectionist war cries from the world's most developed nation”, i.e. the United States of America, under its then-newly elected president, Donald Trump (Luce, 2017). Several pundits asked the question of whether China was becoming the champion of liberal globalization at a time when the United States was retreating from global leadership (e.g. Xuan, 2017; Kellogg, 2017) and developments in the following years have only reinforced this question as the Trump Administration continued to implement illiberal economic positions under the banner of “America First” and contested the multilateral institutions and agreements that are at the heart of the liberal international order that the United States helped to create and sustain since the end of Second World War, whereas China appeared to be pursuing a more liberal international agenda as hinted in Xi's Davos speech. While, in the meantime, the great power competition between the two countries reached an unprecedented scale including battles fought over technological supremacy and diplomatic attacks including mutual closures of consulates, the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic did little, if anything, for the United States and China to overcome their differences in the face of a humanity-wide health crisis vitally necessitating open and transparent global cooperation. On the contrary, the pandemic is actually observed to exacerbate the trends of and the challenges related to both localization and regionalization, as well as the decoupling between the two largest economies of the world (Heisbourg, 2020, p.15).

Is the world facing, as in the words of Xuan Loc Doan (2017), an “unreal reversal of roles” between the United States and China, where the former is adopting nativist and isolationist policies to bring down the liberal international order it has built itself, while the latter, which is led by the single-party regime of a communist party, is defending global openness and cooperation? While it may be too early to definitively answer this question, it has to be noticed that there is a remarkable paradox inherent in the

position it proposes. China is not only said to be defending the liberal international order, but there is also a strong and widely-shared view in the opposite direction, as will be discussed below, that China and its rise within the global economy have been a major dynamic behind the alleged demise of the said order itself. How can China be the champion of a certain kind of international order, when its own record has undermined the very essence of this order in the first place?

This essay hopes to contribute to the ongoing debates around this paradox by making an effort to understand China's relationship with the existing liberal international order through the investigation of a specific case of this country's involvement with global governance, i.e. the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a multilateral development bank (MDB) led by China. The essay will first inquire into debate on the state of the liberal international order and China's part in it, after which it will turn its focus to the AIIB and analyze what this bank's identity and operations reveal about China's relationship with the existing international order. While it has to be acknowledged that the AIIB is only one component of China's much broader engagement with the international order and the governance of it, this bank as a multilateral institution led by China deserves close scrutiny.

## **2. The Liberal International Order and China**

Any effort to understand China's, or any country's, place in the liberal international order needs to begin by defining what the international order is and how its liberal version came into being and was sustained until the current day. Defining international order can be complicated, not only because the concept of "order" in international relations is examined from different vantage points resulting in a plethora of definitions of both descriptive and normative kind, but also because concepts such as "international order", "global order", and "world order" are often used interchangeably (Acharya, 2018, p.4). An appropriate starting point for the purpose of this essay would be to adopt the definition offered by Hedley Bull, who has distinguished between "world order", which in his view applied to "(the) patterns or dispositions of human activity that sustain the elementary or primary goals of social life among mankind as a whole", and "international order", which he deemed as "(the) order among states" (Bull, 2002, p.19), and defined as "a pattern of activity that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states, or international society" (ibid, p.8), with those goals being the preservation of the system and society of states itself, maintaining the independence of individual states, maintenance of peace, limitation of violence, the keeping of promises and the stabilization of possession by rules of property (ibid, pp.16-19). What Bull cited as "a pattern of activity" to sustain the goals of the international society, is captured in a more nuanced way by Hal Brands who defined international order as "the body of rules, norms, and institutions that govern relations among the key players in the international environment" (quoted in Mazarr et al., 2016, p.7).

At this point, a distinction needs to be made between "order" and "governance". As discussed above, international order is about a pattern of activity and/or a set of rules, norms and institutions at a

given time, whereas governance, or “global governance” in this respect, refers to the management of issues relevant to the international order. Amitav Acharya (2016) defines global governance as the “formal or informal management of cross-border issues affecting a significant proportion of the international system by states, international institutions and non-state actors, through power, functional cooperation, laws, regimes and norms” (p.6). In other words, international order and global governance are two closely interrelated concepts, with the latter referring to the processes of managing and sustaining the former by creating norms and mechanisms to deal with cross-border issues.

The liberal international order is a highly contested concept as well. The above given definitions would suggest that it is a set of open and liberal rules, norms and institutions governing international affairs, however there is no agreed upon definition or a document laying out the basis of this concept. Nonetheless, it is widely referred to as the multifaceted order that emerged in the aftermath of the Second World War, under the leadership of the United States in partnership with its allies, as “organized around economic openness, multilateral institutions, security cooperation and democratic solidarity” (Ikenberry, 2018, p.7). According to an accurate typology provided by Hans Kundnani (2017), the multifaceted liberal order encompasses the elements of: i) a security order, in which what states can and cannot in this realm do is determined not by their relative power, but by the boundaries drawn by international law; ii) an economic order, wherein economic relations between states are organized through liberal principles enabling them to conduct their economic and financial relations on the basis of mutual benefits; iii) an human rights order, which promotes universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all (pp.3-6).

Several authors have convincingly discussed that the liberal international order is now experiencing a serious crisis (Ferguson and Zakaria, 2017; Luce 2017; Ikenberry, 2018; Duncombe and Dunne, 2018; Mearsheimer, 2019; Porter, 2020). Although different authors have approached this issue from different angles, they have in common the argument that the crisis of the liberal international order is related to its agency. As stated by Barry Buzan et al (1993) the definition of agency as “the faculty or state of acting or of exerting power” broadly captures the essence of the term in social theory (p.103) and it offers a good starting point for its use with reference to international order. As discussed above, the liberal international order as it stands today is a product of the agency of Western actors, and particularly the United States.<sup>1</sup> However today, seventy-five years after the end of the Second World War, the liberal international order is experiencing a crisis of sustainability, because: i. the agency of the Western actors is eroding; ii. the ongoing shift of global economic power toward non-Western powers requires the recognition and participation of the agency of these actors, which is so far hardly the case.

Despite earlier successes, particularly during the Cold War and the hey-days of globalization during the 1990s and the early 2000s, the agency of the Western actors in liberal international

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1 Defining the liberal international order as “an international system created and managed by the United States after the Second World War to promote capitalism and democracy through building alliances and multilateral institutions”, Amitav Acharya (2018, July 10) goes so far, and accurately so, to call this order “a club of the West”.



order is eroding. According to John J. Mearsheimer (2019), this was inevitable because the order itself was flawed in the first place: Spreading the liberal project around the globe in the post-Cold War period by trying to turn countries governed by illiberal regimes into democracies significantly backfired and undermined the legitimacy of the liberal order itself; the liberal international order created serious political problems regarding sovereignty and national identity within the liberal democracies themselves; the economic side of the liberal international order has not only left most of the developing world behind, but also produced significant economic costs for people inside the developed liberal democracies. A number of subsequent global crises have served to exacerbate these problems and facing with instability at a global scale and economic uncertainties, governments in the liberal democracies of the West opted to close their borders, solidify their power often through populist means, and hoarding wealth. In these countries, liberal projects led inadvertently to illiberal results, which, in turn, adversely affected the liberal international order itself. The path taken by the United States under the Trump Administration is often associated with the decline of liberal values in the West, however the process had begun long before Donald Trump, although he “pushed the liberal order closer to the precipice” (Acharya, 2018, July 10) through unilateral, protectionist, and populist policies, weakening American commitment to the multilateral global order.

The proposition that “(l)iberal orders can arise only in unipolar systems where the leading state is a democracy” (Mearsheimer, 2019, p.7) held well in the early post-Cold War years with the liberal hegemon United States providing public goods through the liberal international order it had created. Today, however, there are doubts on whether the “state” in question is actually “leading”, and whether it is a real liberal democracy. Under these conditions, liberal norms are nothing more than “simply organized hypocrisy, a disguise for underlying national interests” (Kahler, 2016, p.58).

The other globe-wide change that plunged the liberal international order into a crisis is the gradual diffusion of global economic power from the West to the East. Despite the growing weight of non-Western actors, not only in global economy, but in almost all areas of global governance, a real non-Western agency in the liberal international order has not yet materialized. The leadership of institutions responsible for managing the international order continues to reside with the West (Gilpin, 2001, p.386); in these institutions the voting power structure does not reflect the actual balance of power at the global level with the non-Western actors, such as those newly rising powers such as China and India having less than proportionate say in matters that are also affecting them, creating a “gap between the authority of existing institutions and the changing distribution of power in the international system” (ibid, p.381); and the benefits of the liberal international order, such as market access, aid, investment, and collective security, are offered to non-Western actors only selectively and conditionally (Acharya, 2018, July 10). The world has become not only more integrated but also more complex with new issue areas and actors, both state and non-state, continuing to arise; however the liberal international order failed to keep up with the changes, which would have necessitated a pluralized conception of agency that has so far not been the case.

China's relationship with the liberal international order should be seen through this prism. It is crucial to acknowledge at the outset that China's emergence as an economic behemoth was possible thanks to the liberal international order, and not despite it. Beginning with the reforms of the late 1970s, China gradually liberalized its economy (although a similar liberalization did not take place in the political realm), integrated with the global markets, joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, achieved large market shares all around the world particularly in low-value added, labor-intensive products and achieved double-digit growth rates, at least until the global financial crisis of 2007-8. Today, China is not only the second largest economy in the world, but also a major driver of change in the global economy. Robert Muggah and Yves Tiberghien (2018, January 30) draw attention to five facts of the global economy which are triggering "seismic shifts", and all of these facts are related to China:

1. China is in the process of surpassing the United States economically. Over 2017-19, China accounted for 32.5 percent of growth in real global GDP, while the United States' share was 17.9 percent.
2. With the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China is leading the largest urbanization and infrastructure development scheme on earth.
3. China is becoming a global green powerhouse, with the intention to take the lead on climate change reduction.
4. China is setting the global pace on a digital economy, including cashless payments.
5. Chinese universities are vaulting to the top of the international rankings.

China has risen to this level of influence and continues to rise "within an order not of its own making" (Zhang, 2016, p.797), and this should be precisely the departure point for debates around China's relationship with the liberal international order. China's particular state-society model based on the authoritarian single-party rule of the Chinese Communist Party and a hierarchical form of state-society relations based on Confucian values, and its particular model of economic governance, which is defined by many as "state capitalism", where the market exists alongside with a strong degree of state ownership and control, are far from representing liberal values subscribed by the free market economies of the West. Indeed, China's illiberal political economy model has risen within, and by making use of, a liberal international order; and this process has shaped both China and the international order itself.

The question is then, which side is emerging as the more dominant side in this interaction? Is China becoming more liberal and adapting itself to the liberal international order? Or is China's rising influence leading the rest of the world and the order itself to become more illiberal in? In other words, is China a champion of the liberal international order, or a challenge against it?

There is a wide range of academic literature on both prepositions. Several scholars, mainly from the realist strand of International relations, regard China's rise as a threat against the liberal international order due to its differences with American/Western norms and values. Accordingly,

China “pose(s) the greatest challenge to the relatively peaceful and prosperous international order created and sustained by the United States” (Kagan, 2017, January 24), and as China’s rise is challenging and threatening the incumbent hegemon, i.e. the United States, and its region, conflict is inevitable (eg. Mearsheimer, 2010; Yan, 2010; Allison, 2017).

Others, predominantly scholars subscribing to the liberal paradigm of International Relations, observe China’s gradual adaptation and integration into the liberal international order (eg. Kahler, 2016; Ikenberry, 2018). The keyword here is “gradual”, as this argumentation refers to a partial and eclectic adaptation of the liberal order by China. Acharya (2018, July 10) draws attention to the fact that “(w)hile China has pledged to support the liberal order, this is likely only in reference to some of its economic and institutional aspects, especially the flow of trade and investment. China will not support the political foundations of the liberal order, such as democracy and human rights”. For Kahler (2016), China’s support for the liberal international order is not a normative commitment, but a pragmatic reading of its interests (pp.68-70); and a corollary of this argument is that China’s support for the liberal order can reverse if and when its interests change. China’s partial and gradual adaption of the liberal international order means that it also resists the call for liberalization to a certain extent and holds on to the distinctive (read, illiberal) aspects of its state–society model and governance (De Graaff et al, 2020; Weinhardt and Ten Brink, 2020).

Regardless of whether China is a threat against the liberal international order or gradually becoming part of it, how can one define China’s interaction with this order at the policy level? In other words, in what ways does China take part in global governance? Until recently, China kept a low profile when dealing with the institutions of the liberal international order, such as the United Nations (UN) or the WTO, which made sense because as a newcomer to the liberal order, making a gradual adoption of it while at the same time maintaining its own illiberal tenets of economic and political governance, China had neither the experience nor the resources for getting actively involved. With continued high growth of the Chinese economy and China’s deeper integration with the international system, however, this began to change. In other words, as China emerged as a major power, with the early 2000s, it became more assertive in international affairs, seeking centrality in the system in proportion with its economic and military power.

As its economy grew, however, Beijing assumed a more active role in global governance, signaling its potential to lead and to challenge existing institutions and norms. The country boosted its power in four ways: it took on a bigger role in international institutions, advertised its increasing influence, laid the groundwork to create some of its own organizations, and sometimes subverted global governance rules. China started to create Beijing-dominated institutions, a process that would expand in the 2010s (Huang and Kurlantzick, 2020, June 25).

China supported, and continues to support, international institutions and agreements aligned with its own interests, yet on issues in which it diverged from the norms of the liberal international order it refrained from greater involvement. Again, one can see this approach through the lens of

China's gradual engagement with the liberal order, while another view in the opposite direction can be evaluated through the prism of the "China threat" discourse, wherein "(China's) efforts appear to be deepening divides with other countries, particularly democracies that are committed to existing norms and institutions. Ultimately, this divide could make it harder for states to collaboratively address major international challenges, such as global health and development finance" (ibid).

While the outside world sees China's approach to and involvement with the liberal international order in different ways, what is actually the role China is considering for itself in this area for future? To start with, the Chinese government emphasizes the shortcomings of the liberal international order in its current shape, and demands a reformation of the system. Under the banner slogan of "building a community for the shared future of mankind"<sup>2</sup>, the Chinese government proposes to build a new framework of international relations and to promote and improve global governance. A vital component of this proposal is a greater role for China in global governance. Chinese government emphasizes the shortcomings of the current liberal international order, and points to an urgent need for reform, a reform that will also bring more non-Western agency into the order. President Xi Jinping takes every opportunity to underline this conceived role for China at the global, like in his address at the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs in June 2018 where he stated the importance of "making contributions to the building of a community with a shared future for humanity" and the need to "take an active part in leading the reform of the global governance system, and build a more complete network of global partnerships, so that new advances will be made in major country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics to create a favorable environment for, and make due contributions to, building a moderately prosperous society and a great modern socialist country in all aspects" (Xinhua, June 24).

China has benefited and continues to benefit from the existing order as long as its interests aligned with the norms and values underpinning the order, whereas in areas where they do not and where China sees a need for improvement, China wants not only reform to be undertaken, but also to lead the reform process itself. As Wang Honying and James N. Rosenau (2009) wrote after a detailed study of Chinese policymakers' and scholars' positions on this issue: i. "(W)hile China is a stakeholder in the current international system, it must nonetheless play a role in reforming global governance, by addressing the unreasonable and unjust components of the existing order" (p.24), with these unreasonable and unjust components referring to issues related to lack of non-Western agency in the liberal international order; ii. China does not aspire to create an alternative global governance (p.23), meaning that China will continue to benefit from the existing order as

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2 This slogan first appeared in a report delivered by the then president of China, Hu Jintao, to the 18th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in November, 2012, where he said "China will continue to keep in mind both the interests of the Chinese people and the common interests of the people of all countries, get more actively involved in international affairs, play its due role of a major responsible country, and work jointly with other countries to meet global challenges" and "China upholds the principle of balancing rights with obligations. We will take an active part in global economic governance, promote and facilitate free trade and investment, and oppose protectionism in all its forms" (China Daily, 2012, November 18). Subsequently, the concept was adopted by Hu's successor, Xi Jinping.

long as it serves its interests, thus it does not want to replace it with a new one of its own making, rather reform and complement it.

Within this context, China has launched a number of new multilateral initiatives over the past decade, such as the AIIB, BRI, the Silk Road Fund, and the New Development Bank, presenting them not as alternatives to the existing system, but as complements to overcome the shortcomings and improve the efficiency of the current international order. These initiatives are unsurprisingly subject to a debate on whether they are really intended to reinforce the existing order or pose a challenge to it. This essay will inquire into one of those initiatives, the AIIB, with the aim of establishing an informed position on this debate in order to provide a better understanding of China's relationship with the liberal international order and the way it is governed.

### **3. Evolution of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)**

AIIB is a newly established international finance institution led by China and it has been actively involved in financing development projects in the larger Asian continent. It is an MDB<sup>3</sup> that has officially stated its mission as “improving social and economic outcomes in Asia”, which it materializes by providing support in three main areas, which are sustainable infrastructure, cross-border connectivity and private capital mobilization (AIIB, 2020).

The bank commenced operations as of January 2016, with a total subscribed capital of \$100 billion.<sup>4</sup> In this essay and elsewhere the AIIB is often referred to a “China-led” bank, although it is an international institution, and with good reason, as the idea for establishing the bank originated from within China, the bank was initiated, encouraged and realized by China. The idea was first brought forward by the think tank China Center for International Economic Exchanges (CCIEE), during the Boao Forum for Asia held in China in April 2009. Pointing to the large and widening infrastructure gap in Asia, CCIEE proposed that investments in infrastructure in Asia were going to be beneficial in the sense of not only narrowing this gap, but also, from the investors' perspective, for obtaining high yields in return of their investment (Callaghan and Hubbard, 2016, p.121). A few years later in 2013, the idea resurfaced, this time at a higher level, as President Xi Jinping carried on with the suggestion and announced, during an address to the Indonesian parliament in Jakarta, that “China proposes to prepare for the construction of Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank so as to promote connectivity, construction and economic integration process in the region” (MFA, 2013, October 2). In this vein, the first public announcement of the AIIB was done by the president of China and it was highlighted that this

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3 Multilateral development bank (MDB) is defined as “an international financial institution chartered by two or more countries for the purpose of encouraging economic development in poorer nations. Multilateral development banks consist of member nations from developed and developing countries. MDBs provide loans and grants to member nations to fund projects that support social and economic development, such as the building of new roads or providing clean water to communities” (Kenton, 2020, April 15). The AIIB perfectly fits the definition of an MDB.

4 For the purpose of comparison, this amount equals roughly to two-thirds of the capital base of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) (\$160 billion) and less than half of the capital base of the World Bank (\$223 billion) (The Economist, 2014, November 11).

new institution “will work with the existing multilateral development banks outside the region to make full use of their respective advantages and jointly promote the sustained and stable growth of the Asian economy” (ibid).

Following the Jakarta address by Xi, the Chinese side has begun with preparations for the establishment of the new MDB, and more details about the project were shared with the international community. In another Boao Forum for Asia summit, in 2014, the then Deputy Minister of Finance of China, Jin Liqun, provided the following insights:

The concept of AIIB derives from China’s new administration that intends to establish a new multi-lateral financial organization to enhance Asia’s infrastructure development and connectivity. It originates in China, but in my view, as a new multilateral financial organization, it will migrate to an important platform for Asian countries to build partnership, and for countries around the world, developed countries and developing ones, Asia and other regions alike. It will play an important role in fostering connectivity, financial cooperation and many other fields. I believe in the end it will also stimulate the world’s economic recovery (Boao Forum, 2014, July 31).

Following Jin’s remarks, the first chief negotiators’ meeting that was going to pave the way towards the establishment of the AIIB was held in Kunming, China in November 2014 with the participation of delegates from 22 countries.<sup>5</sup> It was not surprising that this meeting was held on Chinese soil, since the idea behind this bank was developed and promoted by China. In May 2015, 21 regional countries from the Asian continent signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Establishing the AIIB in Beijing, followed by another round of a chief negotiators held in Singapore where the final text of the articles of the bank was adopted and the AIIB Charter was finalized. On June 29, 2015 the articles were signed by 57 prospective founding members, and finally, on December 25, 2015 the articles entered into force with 17 signatories<sup>6</sup> holding a total of 50.1 percent of the initial subscriptions of the authorized capital stock depositing their initial capital subscriptions, making the signatory countries all founding members.

With the inaugural meeting of the AIIB Board of Governors held on January 16, 2016 in Beijing, AIIB commenced its operations. The Board of Governors elected the Board of Directors in the following days and Jin Liqun was elected as the President of AIIB. During the establishment process, AIIB included both regional and non-regional countries as charter members. Taiwan and North Korea approached China for joining the AIIB but they were denied membership and few great powers, such as the United States and Japan chose not to take part in the establishment of AIIB.

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5 These countries were, in alphabetical order, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

6 The signatories are, in alphabetical order, Australia, Austria, Brunei, China, Georgia, Germany, Jordan, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Singapore, South Korea and the United Kingdom. Later they were joined by 35 more countries that also became founding members.

AIIB held its first annual meeting on June 24, 2016 in Beijing, China where the headquarters of the bank is located, and during this meeting the Board of Governors approved the first four projects that AIIB would finance. As the bank's aim is to support infrastructure development in Asia, these first projects had indeed a focus on infrastructure, and three of them were decided to be co-financed with other international financial institutions, i.e. the World Bank, ADB, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). In June 2017, the second annual meeting was held in Jeju, South Korea, where the Sustainable Energy for Asia Strategy was approved by the bank in order to support energy projects promoting sustainability. Subsequently, the very first loan to China was approved in December 2017 for a project supporting the reduction of coal use in the country.

Following the third annual meeting held in Mumbai, India, in 2018, the AIIB held its fourth annual meeting on European soil, in Luxembourg, in 2019. This meeting aimed to improve dialogue among stakeholders and to that end, it hosted the Asian Infrastructure Forum, a business development event focused on creating connections, developing project pipelines and sharing insights on the bank's corporate procurement policies and procedures. Moreover the Luxembourg meeting also set the stage to promote the bank's commitment to drive a green economy through environmentally sustainable, adaptable and innovative infrastructure investments.

In 2020, the bank's annual meeting was held as a virtual online forum, due to the measures taken against the global Covid-19 pandemic. The bank has developed a Crisis Recovery Facility in order to support its members as well as existing and prospective projects against financial and public health related risks caused by the pandemic. Covering the period between April 2020 and October 2021, AIIB's Crisis Recovery Facility will provide \$5-10 billion for projects impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, within both the public and the private sector.

According to its Articles of Agreement, AIIB “provides or facilitates financing to any member, or any agency, instrumentality or political subdivision thereof, or any entity or enterprise operating in the territory of a member, as well as to international or regional agencies or entities concerned with economic development of the Asia region” and the financing is made through a variety of channels “including, inter alia, making loans, investing in the equity capital of an enterprise, and guaranteeing, whether as primary or secondary obligor, in whole or in part, loans for economic development” (AIIB, 2020).

As of July 2020, there have been 90 approved projects of AIIB in 26 countries, with a total of \$19.8 billion approved financing.<sup>7</sup> As seen in the figure below, the majority of these projects are in the energy sector, followed by financial infrastructure and transportation. Additionally, there are 11

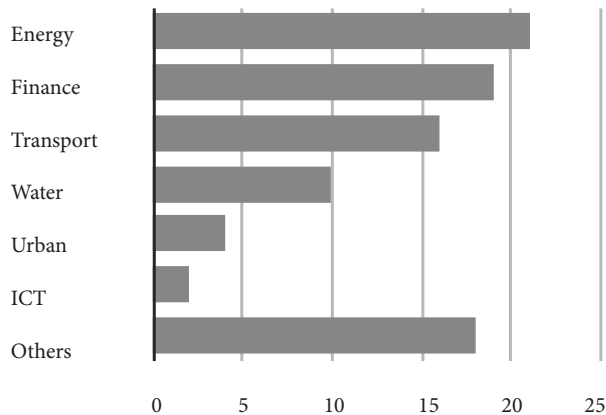
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<sup>7</sup> Eight projects were approved in 2016, 15 in 2017, 12 in 2018, 28 in 2019, and 27 in the first seven months of 2020. The largest project for which the AIIB has provided funding so far is the Tuz Gölü Gas Storage Expansion Project in Turkey, which aims to increase the reliability and security of gas supply by expanding underground gas storage capacity, and the total financing amount provided by the AIIB is \$600 million, within a total project value of \$2.74 billion.



projects approved as a part of AIIB Project Preparation Special Fund, and 48 projects proposed to AIIB and that have not received approval yet as of the time of writing.

**Figure 1:** Sectoral distribution of projects approved by the AIIB (as of July 2020)

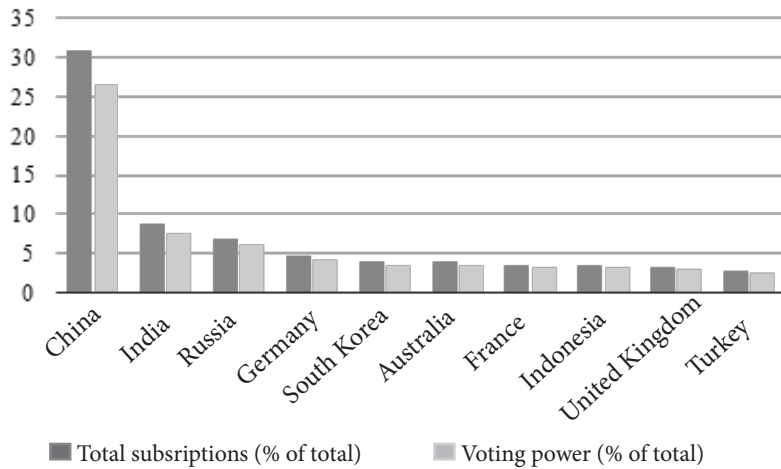


**Source:** Compiled by the authors using official AIIB data (AIIB, 2020).

Currently the AIIB has 103 members, of which 82 are full members with subscribed capital and voting rights, whereas 21 are prospective members that will reach the full membership status once they submit their subscriptions. The members are categorized in two groups and there are 45 regional (i.e. from Asia) and 37 non-regional members.

There are three levels of governance in AIIB, which are the Board of Governors, Board of Directors and the President of AIIB. The Board of Governors is the main source of power within the bank. According to the Articles of Agreement every member selects a governor and an alternate governor for the Board of Governors, which then selects the Board of Director that carries out the operational work of the bank by executing decisions on strategy, preparing annual planning, and carrying out all related actions to budget including financing of projects. The Board of Governors also elects the President, which has two roles as the principal executive of the AIIB and the chairman of the Board of Directors. The hierarchical formation of these levels suggests that the role of Board of Governors is highly important in forming other decision-making roles of the AIIB.



**Figure 2:** Ten largest members of the AIIB (as of July 2020)

Source: Compiled by the authors using official AIIB data (AIIB, 2020).

Figure 2 shows the ten countries that hold the most power in the AIIB. As a founding member, China has the highest amount of subscriptions with \$29.8 billion, which corresponds to 30.8 percent of total subscriptions. As voting power is proportionate with the amount of subscribed capital, China holds the greatest voting power with 26.6 percent of total votes in the bank, which yields in control over the governance of the bank, and this explains why the AIIB is commonly called a “Chinese-led” MDB. India ranks second in the list, yet it has less than one third of China’s power. Another important information arising from Figure 2 is that the ten largest shareholders of the AIIB include a balanced number of both regional and non-regional members.

**Table 1:** Comparison of subscriptions and voting power among AIIB members (as of July 2020)

	Number of member countries	Subscriptions		Voting power	
		Amount (US\$ million)	Share in total	Number of votes	Share in total
China	1	29,780.40	30.78%	300,055	26.60%
Regional members (other than China)	44	44,075.40	45.56%	527,491	46.76%
Non-regional members	37	22,888.10	23.66%	300,562	26.64%
<b>Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>96,743.90</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,126,108</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Compiled by the authors using official AIIB data (AIIB, 2020).

Table 1 provides a more in-depth insight into the membership structure of the AIIB. China is evidently the largest shareholder and has the most power in the bank. It is interesting to notice that China’s voting power is almost the same as the voting power of all 37 non-regional members

combined. In the meantime, when brought together, the 44 regional members (excluding China) have much larger power than both China itself and the non-regional members. These are cumulative figures, and one should keep in mind, as seen in Figure 2, there are non-regional members with significant influence over the bank.

In sum, the AIIB is an MDB founded and brought to life as a Chinese initiative, one where China is the most powerful shareholder. It is a regional bank, operating globally with a significant number of non-regional member countries. The question is then, what can the AIIB tell us about China's relations with the liberal international order? Is AIIB a contribution to this order and the way it is governed, a complement rather than a substitute for existing institutions? Or is it a threat against the liberal order, a tool for China to modify the international order in its own image, an effort, as in the words of Bradley A. Thayer and Han Lianchao (2020, April 19), to “establish a new model of global governance that would be defined by firm hierarchical relationships between states, with China on top of that hierarchy”?

#### **4. What does the AIIB Mean for the Liberal International Order?**

A good starting point for tackling the question posed above in the title of this subsection is to inquire into the extent to which the AIIB is “liberal” itself. Is the AIIB managed and is its *modus operandi* compatible with the liberal values that underpin the existing international order?

By the time the AIIB was being founded, there were concerns cited in the West, and mainly by the United States, which had chosen not to join the institution, about the lack of clarity about the AIIB's governance and that “the China-led bank may fail to live up to the environmental, labor and procurement standards that are essential to the mission of development lenders” (The Economist, 2014, November 11). In those early years, academic observers of the AIIB were also drawing attention to “China's non-commitment on transparency and the absence of sufficient information on the AIIB”, which some regarded as tactics to keep the Americans outside the institution (Hamanaka, 2016, p.290). In the following time, the AIIB made improvements in this respect, strengthening relevant policies, including the launch of well-defined reporting and performance guidelines and the Policy on Public Information, which aims to promote transparency in operations through a policy on the disclosure of information, while at the same time assuring the international community that the AIIB will be rigorous in adopting the best practices of the established international financial institutions such as the World Bank. AIIB is now said to be “largely follow(ing) the governance features and decision-making procedures of these two, existing institutions”, referring to the World Bank and the ADB (Wei, 2020, p.7).

The decision making system at the AIIB also need to be subjected to greater scrutiny if one is to understand how liberal the bank when conducting operations. To start with, “consensus” is an important concept when it comes to making decisions at the AIIB. As it is the case with both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), consensus, i.e. decision making without a vote and without objection by any of the parties involved, is sought wherever possible

despite formal provisions of majority vote in the articles of the bank. Naturally consensus gives maximum legitimacy to the decision and makes easy for the decision to be implemented. When a consensus fails, a 75 percent affirmative vote is required for the decision to be ratified, and in this sense, AIIB's system is similar to those of the World Bank and the IMF, where the quorum is two thirds of the total voting power for the former and 85 percent for the latter. Again, similar with the World Bank and the IMF, and unlike the UN and the WTO, AIIB implements a system linking the voting right to capital subscriptions.

As discussed in the preceding section, China has the largest share in the bank, and has a voting power of 26.6 percent, which gives it *de facto* veto power due to the 75 percent quorum required, just like the United States having an effective veto power with its 16.52 percent share in total voting power in a system where 85 percent approval is required.<sup>8</sup> China's position at the AIIB in this respect is similar to the United States' position at the IMF, however there are also some differences between the two institutions. As Gu Bin (2017) explains in detail: i. AIIB uses the GDP of a country as the only benchmark to decide that country's capital to be subscribed in the bank, unlike the IMF which uses other criteria as well such as openness, economic variability and international reserves, and therefore AIIB's system is pro-development and more advantageous for developing countries; ii. AIIB allocates roughly three-fourths of its capital shares to regional countries and one-fourth to non-regional members, thus retaining the Asian character of the institution; iii. China has so far shown no intention to seek veto power (pp.149-151). In other words, the leading member of the AIIB has veto power, but other international financial institutions have the same thing, while at the same time the system at the AIIB is providing greater advantage for developing economies, which is not often the case with other international financial institutions.

The question of how the China-led AIIB relates to the liberal international order also requires a discussion on the relationship between the AIIB and the institutions of that order, i.e. the Western-led MDBs. China has "supported the development of the multilateral character of the AIIB by supporting the Bank to work within the 'family' of MDBs, including the World Bank, ADB, ERBD, and other MDBs, to co-finance projects, and conducting by human resources exchanges (Zhu, 2019, p.653).<sup>9</sup> This support has been bearing fruit, as more than half of the approved infrastructure projects supported by the AIIB (i.e. 53 out of 90 as of July 2020) have been co-financed with other MDBs.<sup>10</sup> Working together with other MDBs generates greater legitimacy for the AIIB, which is a relatively new institution, increases the socialization of the bank into

8 Unlike the UN, MDBs do not have a defined veto power, but if a member holds a significant voting power, then that member could have the power to veto a decision in a *de facto* way. Basically if minimum majority required for the vote is "x" percent, then a voting power of at least "100-x" percent gives the member in question the right to veto any decision.

9 In 2016, the AIIB signed a memorandum of understanding regarding jointly financing sustainable development projects with the ADB and a co-financing framework agreement with the World Bank.

10 For instance, the project that has received the largest amount of AIIB funding so far, the Tuz Gölü Gas Storage Expansion Project in Turkey (see footnote 9), was co-financed by the AIIB, World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, as well as the Turkish government itself and commercial loans.

the existing system and the international order, and it is beneficial for all the parties involved as it helps to “prevent wastefulness and ‘race to the bottom’ scenarios in relation to the social and environmental impacts of infrastructure projects they finance” (Ong, 2017, p.559). In other words, rather than excluding itself from and posing a threat against the liberal international order, the AIIB is working within the boundaries of the order, cooperating, coordinating and collaborating with its institutions, creating greater value together than what can be achieved by the AIIB or any other MDB on its own. Moreover, governance arrangements of the AIIB are almost identical with those of other MDBs, which certainly facilitates cooperation, helps integrating the AIIB into the system and refuting claims that with the AIIB, China wants to create a new system of its own.

The AIIB is often portrayed as an instrument for China to further its strategic goals at the geopolitical level, which, of course, would not mean a positive development for the liberal international order. It is not unprecedented that leading powers in international organizations are using their position to further their own foreign policy goals, and while the Trump Administration’s record with international organizations provides a good illustration for this point, China’s position in the AIIB in this respect does not appear too different than the United States’ role in the World Bank, European role in the IMF and Japan’s role in the ADB. While it is true that the AIIB was established as a part of China’s ambitious international agenda, it is also important to note that recently, especially since 2017, the Chinese government has been rather restrained in its dealings with the AIIB, providing greater policy and operational autonomy for the bank, and maintaining distance between the bank and China’s other initiatives such as the BRI (Chin, 2019; Andornino, 2019).

Another question that begs an answer is, if the AIIB is a threat posed by China against the Western-led international order, why have so many Western countries, including allies of the United States, have been so keen to join the bank, and why are some of them, as shown in Figure 2, among the largest shareholders of the AIIB? One answer to this question relates to the nature of MDBs, where borrowing member countries benefit by obtaining access to funding on better terms than they could from commercial lenders, while at the same time donor countries primarily have political benefits as they can use the MDBs as a vehicle to promote their interest and influence in the area (Delikanlı et al, 2018, p.22). Since the Western countries are mainly donors rather than borrowers, the AIIB provides them a valuable opportunity to increase their influence in Asia and also to build a mutually beneficial relationship with the world’s second largest economy, China. Moreover, AIIB has been attractive for Western countries, because, as discussed by Jan Knoerich and Francisco Urdinez (2019), China has granted them agency in the process of creating the organization and deciding about its memberships. In other words, Western countries joined the AIIB because they would have a significant say in it. This pluralism at the roots of the AIIB is certainly evidence for the bank’s purpose of integrating with the existing order, rather than challenging it and building a new one.

The AIIB as a newly established MDB supports the current international order and its governance in multiple ways. First of all, it was created as a response to a global need. According to the ADB,

the cost of building the infrastructure that developing Asia will need in order to maintain the economic growth that lets people out of poverty is estimated at \$8 trillion (ADB, 2013, September 30). While the AIIB cannot close this gap on its own, its contribution is undeniably vital. Moreover, the AIIB brings a strong impetus for reform of the existing MDBs that have long been deemed insufficient by offering a credible alternative, and the novel governance features adopted by the AIIB, such as the emphasis on efficiency, less formality and legality, streamlined decision making with equal participation by borrowing countries, a non-resident board, and detailed oversight arrangements can be of great value in this respect (Wang, 2017; Lichtenstein, 2019). In other words, instead of challenging the liberal international order, AIIB actually has the potential to contribute to its reform process.

## 5. Conclusion

As the world enters the third decade of the 21st century, the Western-led liberal international order, established in the middle of the previous century, is facing troubled times, a crisis of unsustainability. While liberal values themselves are eroding in the Western world, and the United States is forfeiting its position of a liberal hegemony, the liberal order has also failed to respond to ongoing shift of global economic power toward non-Western powers, most of which are governed by illiberal, authoritarian regimes. A more pluralistic world is certainly emerging, but with heavy growing pains and an unprecedented level of uncertainty.

China's rise to the status of an economic superpower is a key component of this process and informs the debates around the future of the liberal international order. China has risen within and by making efficient use of the liberal international order, however, is its illiberal mode of governance becoming now a threat against the same order? China does not propose a direct and opposite alternative for the existing liberal international order, and it will continue to benefit from it, albeit eclectically, in the sense that China embraces the liberal economic order, it still maintains distance with other elements of the liberal system, which are the security order and the human rights order.

It is not about China attempting to replace the liberal order with a new and illiberal one. Instead, China rejects political and economic uniformity in the shape of the liberal international order, which is considered as imposed by the West as an universal, one-size-fits-all model, and its aims with regards to the development of the existing international order is twofold: i. Reform the existing system, make it more suitable for meeting the needs of an increasingly interdependent global economy, and, as China, have a greater say in the affairs of global governance proportional to the country's actual weight in the global economy; ii. Create competing institutions that would complement, not substitute the existing system.

As a newly established MDB, the AIIB is such an institution. It can surely be seen as part of a Chinese effort to improve its relative power in the world order by creating a competitive institution against the Western-dominated MDBs, and expanding Chinese influence within

existing institutions by showing that it offers a solid alternative. However, that does not necessarily mean that AIIB is a challenge against the existing liberal order. In fact AIIB has so far adopted norms, rules, and procedures that are in line with global standards. AIIB collaborates with other MDBs, its institutional and operational format is similar to established banks, it has an inclusive membership base, its lending practices are in line with global norms, and it has even developed a social and environmental framework.

China is neither a threat against nor a completely integral part of the liberal international order. It is partly adapting to this order, its institutions, networks and the rules of the game, demanding reformation of parts of the order that are deemed outdated or insufficient, playing a role in the reformation process, while at the same time adhering strictly to its own distinctive aspects of its state–society model and governance, which can in many cases be defined as being illiberal and authoritarian. The AIIB can be seen through this lens. It is China’s institutional answer to the existing order, and in many ways it is similar to the established institutions of that order, but it also brings novelties, which can help to reform and improve the competencies of the system rather than overturning it.

The future of AIIB will depend on China’s political and economic interests and develop with the support of Chinese government; and at the same time “as AIIB’s membership spans the globe, a broad range of regional and global frictions and friendships will doubtless influence its path forward” (Lichtenstein, 2018, p.203). There already are global frictions, mainly in the form of reactions against China’s perceivably illiberal handling of issues of global importance, with a recent example being the American-led call for international inquiry into the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic and China’s responsibilities in its outbreak, and there surely will be more in the future, which can negatively affect the AIIB. Nevertheless the more AIIB contributes to the improvement of the global economy in real terms, the greater will be the legitimacy of China as a rising power and the more will be its share in reshaping the international order, where China will be a major rule-maker, rather than a rule-taker.

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## ‘The Middle Power Moment’ Revisited in Global Governance: A Chance for MIKTA’s Legitimacy Crisis in Post-Pandemic World?

### Küresel Yönetişimde ‘Orta Ölçekli Güç Dönemi’ni Yeniden Düşünmek: Pandemi Sonrası Dünyada MIKTA’nın Meşruiyet Krizi için Bir Fırsat mı?

Radiye Funda KARADENİZ\* 

#### Abstract

MIKTA – Mexico, Indonesia, Korea, Turkey and Australia – emerged in the context of post – 2008 crisis as an informal political grouping such as G20 and BRICS when the world witnessed the discussions on the declining US hegemony and the rise of ‘middle power’ moment in the changing world order. It is argued that despite the joint declarations, its existence brought no contribution for global governance and after seven years of its emergence, its relevance and resilience has started to be questioned. This article asks whether the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic brings risks or opportunities for MIKTA to overcome this crisis of legitimacy. It is argued that the Covid-19 crisis may be regarded as a chance for MIKTA to strengthen its presence in global governance although it presents economic and political challenges for member countries. In order to do this, firstly the discussions on ‘the middle power moment’ for global governance in the Covid-19 world will be analysed and secondly, MIKTA’s legitimacy crisis will be evaluated within this context.

**Keywords:** MIKTA, Legitimacy, the Covid-19 Pandemic, Informal Organizations, Minilateralism

#### Öz

2008 Krizi sonrası değişen dünya düzeninde azalan Amerikan hegemonyası ve orta ölçekli güçlerin yükseliş amı üzerine tartışmaların sürdüğü bir dönemde Meksika, Endonezya, Türkiye, Güney Kore ve Avustralya’nın birlikteliğinden doğan MIKTA, küresel düzlemdeki G-20 ve BRICS gibi informal örgütlerden biridir. Fakat MIKTA’nın kuruluşunun 7. yılında örgütün küresel yönetişime ortak deklarasyonlar yayımlamak ve toplantılar düzenlemek dışında ne kadar katkı sağladığı sorgulanmaya başlanmıştır. Bu makale Covid-19 pandemisinin MIKTA’nın meşruiyet krizini aşmak için ne türden risk ve fırsatlar getirdiğini araştırarak üye ülkeler açısından sosyo-ekonomik meydan okumalar yaratsa da pandeminin MIKTA’nın küresel yönetişimdeki görünürlüğünü artırmak için bir şans yarattığını iddia etmektedir. Bunun için öncelikle pandemi döneminde küresel yönetişimde orta ölçekli güçlerin yükselişi üzerine yapılan tartışmaları ele alacak ve sonrasında MIKTA’nın meşruiyet krizini bu çerçevede değerlendirecektir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** MIKTA, Meşruiyet, Covid-19 Pandemisi, İnformal Örgütler, Az-Tarafılık

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## 1. Introduction

As a 'consultative group' of Mexico, Indonesia, Korea<sup>1</sup>, Turkey and Australia – MIKTA was launched by foreign ministers in the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2013 and became an actor as one of the informal organizations in global governance. Declared by its members as 'a new innovative partnership', 'a cross-regional', 'open and informal consultative group', MIKTA aimed to contribute finding solutions to issues challenging global community as 'like-minded' and active contributors (MIKTA Booklet, 2020, p.2). However, despite the enthusiasm of its members in the beginning, MIKTA has progressed slowly compared to BRICS (Kim, Hung and Rimmer, 2018, p.476). Some analysts even asserted that MIKTA is 'a waste of time' (Robertson, 2020a) and 'its only success may be that it still exists' (Robertson, 2018). In other words, after seven years of its emergence, pessimists about MIKTA started to question its legitimacy.

MIKTA emerged in the context of post-2008 crisis on the side lines of other informal political groupings such as G20 and BRICS when the world witnessed the discussions on the declining US hegemony and the rise of 'middle power' moment. In this 'post-American hegemonic world order' there emerged various concepts, as 'post-Western' world order (Stuenkel, 2016), 'rise of the rest' (Zakaria, 2008), 'interdependent hegemonic world' (Xing, 2016), 'Pax Mosaica' (Narlikar and Kumar, 2012), 'decentralized globalism' (Buzan, 2011), 'the multiplex world' (Acharya, 2017), 'the age of anxiety' (Öniş, 2017), 'the age of hybridity' (Öniş and Kutlay, 2020) and 'the age of entropy' (Schweller, 2011) to give meaning to the 'interregnum' period of the world order with Gramscian words. This transition period from 'unipolar moment' of US to multipolar world brought many challenges for global governance which reflect characteristics of 'world disorder', 'world new order' and 'world re-order' simultaneously (Xing and Christensen, 2016, p.4-5).

By world disorder it is meant the damage that the competition between existing and emerging powers have on the international regimes and the established structure. By world new order, it is claimed that the disorder will force the existing and emerging powers to negotiate on a new order based on new values and norms. By world re-order, it is believed that the existing world order is in the *transformismo* process taking new rising powers into the existing structure. In this world order displaying these characteristics, 'the crises of the hegemony of the existing world order', 'the rise of China and other emerging powers' and 'adaptations to the changing world order' are happening at the same time (Xing and Christensen, 2016, p.5). This view of the world presenting different features at the same time is also a reflection of what Öniş and Kutlay describe with the concept of 'age of hybridity', in which there are competing paradigms to give a shape global governance. Hence, there are many opportunities and challenges creating instability, uncertainty and anxiety in international politics (Öniş and Kutlay, 2020). The uncertainty and anxiety in the current order has been accelerated by the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic in the beginning of 2020.

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1 Throughout the article, 'Korea' and 'South Korea' will be used interchangeably for Republic of Korea.

The crisis opened the discussions that how the new pandemic in human history will change the world order. It is mostly agreed that ‘the Covid-19 crisis has not made any winner, just many losers’ (Guehenno, 2020). In economic sphere the damage of the pandemic on world economy is bigger than the Great Depression of 1929 (IMF Report, 2020). The declining hegemony of US in post-2008 era has been accelerated by unsuccessful examples of management of the pandemic of the US and China compared to middle powers. This showed that in post-Covid-19 world there appears another ‘middle power moment’ for middle powers to play more roles in global governance and to strengthen depreciating multilateralism (Jones, 2020; Pant, 2020; Nagy,2020; West, 2020).

Within this ‘middle power moment’ debate the article asks whether the Covid-19 pandemic is an opportunity or a threat to MIKTA which is already in crisis of legitimacy. In order to do this, it will analyse firstly the debates on the ‘middle power moment’ in global governance and assess MIKTA’s place in this debate. Then it will be argued that the Covid-19 crisis may present threats but also opportunities for MIKTA to strengthen its presence in global governance and restore its legitimacy both in the eyes of its members and the international community.

## **2. ‘The Middle Power Moment’ for Global Governance: Illusion or A New Revival?**

Although there is ongoing debate on how to define concepts ‘traditional middle power’, “established middle power” and “emerging middle power”, most scholars agree on (1) material (positional), (2) behavioural (3) ideational factors as three defining feature of middle power role (Chapnick, 1999; Carr, 2014; Robertson, 2017; Dal and Kurşun, 2016 in Gök and Karadeniz, 2018, p.137). The idea of middle power as potentially significant actor in international affairs came into usage in both politics and academic literature since the end of World War I however became more noticeable with Canada’s actions in the aftermath of 1945. It is underlined that for global governance the importance of middle powers is not only their material capabilities but what they do with them such as ‘their tendency to pursue multilateral solutions to international problems’ and to ‘embrace notions of good international citizenship to guide their diplomacy’ (Evans, 2011).

Therefore, for Evans (2011), rather than to focus on how to define ‘middle power’, analysing middle power diplomacy is more useful for global governance. He describes middle power diplomacy as:

‘Middle power diplomacy, is, in short, the kind of diplomacy which can, and should, be practised by states which are not big or strong enough, either in their own region or the wider world, to impose their policy preferences on anyone else; but who do recognize that there are international policy tasks which need to be accomplished if the world around them is to be safer, saner, more just and more prosperous (with all the potential this has, in turn, to affect their own interests); and who have sufficient capacity and credibility to be able to advance those tasks.’<sup>2</sup>

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2 This is an excerpt from his speech delivered at Chile Pacific Foundation. Gareth Evans, ‘Middle Power Diplomacy’. Lecture in Chile Pacific Foundation, Santiago, 29 June, 2011. Available at: <http://www.gevans.org/speeches/speech441.html>

According to this view, the characteristic method of middle power diplomacy is “niche diplomacy”, which means concentrating state capacities in specific areas. This diplomacy style has also been witnessed in regional and constructive powers. Middle power, regional power and constructive power in common share two features: ‘influencing the international arena, by building coalitions, fostering multilateral institutions, and serving as bridges between groups of countries and regions and secondly, assuming a wide range of responsibilities in the global order and making good use of diplomatic instruments to fulfil their commitments’ (Shiavon and Dominguez, 2016, p.498).

Cooper and Dal (2017) analyse middle power diplomacy in three periods. The first one witnessed in global governance in the post-1945 era through multilateral efforts in the UN. Second wave was in ad hoc activism of middle powers such as Canada or Australia in specific issue areas such as disarmament and peacekeeping. The third period of middle power diplomacy came with the rise of informal institutional diplomacy associated with G20 (p.520-521).

In this third way middle powers use informal forums in and around the G20 not the UN. In post global financial crisis of 2008 with the decline of US hegemony, not its power as Acharya differentiates (Kuo, 2016), middle powers had opportunities of ‘rooms of manoeuvre’ at regional and global levels ‘to sit the same high table with great powers’ (Cooper and Dal, 2017, p.523). In this context, emerging middle powers established ‘minilateral’ (Naim, 2009) informal governmental organizations to play active roles in niche areas of their interest in 2010s. This period is later called as ‘renaissance’ of middle power diplomacy (Carr, 2020, p.9).

### **2.1. Minilateralism, Informality and the ‘Middle Power Moment’**

Informal governmental organizations (IGO) are useful tools for states when power transitions are uncertain at global level in order to allow them to achieve some level of cooperation. States also choose to work with these institutions when they want to maintain flexibility in contrast to making a binding commitment. Flexibility provides states room for manoeuvre in safe waters where they do not want to make strong commitments due to high uncertainty about future structure of the world (Vabulas and Snidal, 2013, p.209-210). Yet as with the establishment of informal international organizations beside formal organizations started to create ‘messy multilateralism’ Haas (2010) in which there is the difficulty of finding common ways of seen as in the failure of multilateral talks and international collective action in the early 1990s (Naim, 2009). In response to the problems associated to multilateralism, minilateralism became a viable option bringing to the table the smallest number of states which will be active and effective on solving a particular problem. Both its numerical dimension and relative exclusivity make minilateralism more ‘attractive, flexible, and functional’ (Singh and Teo, 2020, p.6).

Within this atmosphere, the middle power diplomacy initiatives such as BRICS and MIKTA emerged within the G-20 as examples of minilateral informal organizations as manifestations

of third wave of middle power diplomacy. They became venues for middle powers to increase their voices higher on the need to reform the UN and multilateral institutions. In the case of MIKTA, it took the role of acting as a bridge between developed and developing countries in G-20 meetings. The creation of BRICS Development Bank, China and Brazil's demand for 'responsibility while protecting' against the Western version of 'Responsibility to Protect' after the experience of Libya in 2011, China's 'One Belt, One Road Initiative', the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank were indicative of the results of rising powers moment in global governance (Hurrel, 2019, p.11-12). Hence in this post-hegemonic multilateralism, the rise of informals and appearance of global summitry increased the variety of actors and arrangements pushing for collective action in international governance (Alexandroff and Brean, 2015, p.9). 'The rise of informals' also symbolized a turn in global politics 'opening representation beyond old western establishment' (Cooper, 2015, p.96).

On the other hand, some analysts have doubts about 'the rise of middle power moment' in global governance due to both changes at global and state level started at the end of 2010s. The systemic changes with the return of geopolitics such as the rise of ethnic and military conflicts seen in many parts of the world such as Iraq, Libya and Syria, displayed the importance of military capacities. In addition, the election of Donald J. Trump as US President in November 2016 and his policy of 'America First' anti-free trade rhetoric (Hammold,2017), together with stalemates in multilateral trade negotiations as seen in the Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the rise of tensions between US and China in global politics created systemic threats to the capacities of middle powers to influence the global agenda. At state level, many emerging economies have witnessed slow economic growth or recession, corruption cases and political crises as seen in Brazil and South Africa. Moreover, political divisions increased within the BRICS (Hurrel, 2019, p.16,21). Domestic shifts in MIKTA and BRICS countries also challenged their motivations to start international normative initiatives since they provide no benefit in taking electoral support at home. Thus, from the perspective of Carr 'middle power moment was an illusion' (Carr, 2020, p.9-10).

To sum up, at the end of 2010s, although there were some middle power initiatives, both domestic structural and systemic limitations affecting middle powers' capacity to influence global governance were rising. In this atmosphere, for Robertson it is expected that middle powers niche diplomacy areas will be more self-interested rather than focusing on trade liberalisation, non-proliferation or humanitarian development. Hence it was thought 'contemporary understanding of middle-power diplomacy is tied to a bygone era' (Robertson,2020b).

## **2.2. The Covid-19 Challenge in Global Governance and Rethinking the 'Middle Power Moment'**

The Covid-19 pandemic emerged within the context of the diminishing influence of middle power diplomacy in global governance and the new crisis brought a discussion whether it might open a new chapter for another 'middle power moment' (Pant, 2020). The response of the US

and China to the Covid-19 pandemic showed their unwillingness to cooperate and revealed how multilateralism is at risk in today's world. High death tolls, 'politization of the virus' and Trump Administration disrespect for key institutions of Western led world order during the pandemic such as the decision of withdrawal from World Health Organization (WHO) accelerated the decline of US hegemony and opened the way for discussions on the importance of multilateralism for global governance (Nagy, 2020).

West discusses that in this global leadership vacuum it is time middle powers to punch above their weights to 'seize the moment' (West, 2020). It is asserted that middle power leadership is needed in global governance to reform the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the WHO and coordinate efforts for developing Covid-19 vaccine and medicine. Nagy also underlines that in order to manage climate change, regional conflicts and possible next global health crisis middle power's role is highly important. In the strategic competition between China and the US, middle powers acting collectively can fill the power vacuum in multilateralism in trade and security, 'put diplomatic pressure on great powers and increase interoperability with each other in search and rescue, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, anti-piracy, and capacity enhancement in fishing' (Nagy,2020). Pant (2020) also underlines that some middle powers were more successful in humanitarian response projection during the pandemic. For instance, East Asian countries such as South Korea becoming a model case to combat the Covid-19 pandemic as supplier of testing kits and personal protective equipment with 150 countries including the US. In addition, New Zealand and Australia provided fund support for WHO coronavirus pandemic plan and their Pacific neighbours with medical supplies.

Oğuzlu (2020) also underlines the need for middle powers' collective action in world politics to 'domesticate' international politics through common interests such as multilateralism, international organizations, international law, diplomacy and other mechanisms of global governance. He says that 'the time is ripe for middle powers and the world to unite'. In the absence of great power leadership in combating the crisis middle powers have the potential to coordinate health governance, developing vaccine and mitigate economic aftershocks of the pandemic. Yet in order to fulfil their potentials, Jones (2020) underlines as Pant (2020), the importance of making multilateral diplomacy sustainable to lead the world out of crisis and to overcome the limitations of not including the world's leading greatest powers. Unless regional and emerging powers gather their attempts through sustainable multilateral interactions, dangers in the system will be dispersed and responsibilities will be undefined which in turn will lead to disorder (Pant,2020). Therefore, initiatives such as 'the alliance for multilateralism' led by France and Germany including 25 states established in September, 2019 (Alliance for Multilateralism, 2019) and minilateral informal institutions supporting collective action in global governance become vital.

The next section will discuss whether MIKTA has the potential to contribute for collective action in global governance in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic and hence to overcome its legitimacy crisis in 'the new middle power moment'.

### 3. MIKTA and the Debate on Its Role in Global Governance

In the ‘middle power moment’ of post-2008 era, MIKTA has been emerged as ‘new innovative partnership’ in 2013. The member countries represent a population of some 500 million people and their economies represent 5.8 percent of global gross domestic product. As a platform of countries from different regions and cultures, what made them come together is not only their material capabilities within the G20 but also their ‘like-mindedness’ on global governance issues which presents an example of middle power diplomacy (MIKTA Booklet, 2020). In 2015 with the declaration of ‘Vision Statement’, member countries clearly showed how they perceive MIKTA (MIKTA Vision Statement, 2015).

In Vision Statement, member countries emphasized their common views on the importance of changing nature of global issues which needs cooperation and underlined the will and capability of them to contribute for protecting public goods and strengthening global governance by playing a constructive role in international agenda. These roles are stated as: i) bridging between developed and developing countries to promote global governance and efforts of regionalism, ii) catalysing or facilitating in launching initiatives to implement global governance reform and iii) helping each other to better communicate with regional bodies and networks (MIKTA Vision Statement, 2015). In 2017 ‘Guidelines on the works and activities of MIKTA’ was announced to realize the vision. It is often emphasized that MIKTA was seen as a cross-regional ‘consultative’ body. This means that member states use the platform as an opportunity to strengthen their bilateral ties, and to increase cooperation with each other (MIKTA, 2017). In MIKTA Guidelines (2017, p. 4) seven enduring priorities are listed as reform of international energy governance and the promotion of energy access counter-terrorism and security; peacekeeping; trade and the economy; gender equality; good governance, human rights and democracy; and sustainable development. These priorities are the areas where the members’ niche diplomacy practices focus on in global governance. What makes MIKTA different from BRICS and other informal groupings, is its more reform-oriented approach towards international order and supportive of current global governance as taking the UN main pillar, with another words, ‘they seek to represent the rest but not dominate the rest’ (Kim, Hung and Rimmer, 2018, p.479). It was not created as an identity building institution based on demands for global redistribution of power in global governance.

Most scholars have accepted a definition of MIKTA countries as emerging middle powers based not only on their material (positional) power, but also on behavioural and ideational aspects (Cooper, 2015, Dal and Kurşun, 2016, Gök and Karadeniz, 2018). As seen from the table below they are the second top ten countries in terms of material capabilities in G20.



**Table 1:** MIKTA Members' Material Capabilities

MIKTA Members	Gross domestic product (GDP), current prices Millions of US Dollars	World Ranking (GDP terms)	Population based on last census of MIKTA countries
TURKEY	754.412	19	83.430
MEXICO	1.258.287	15	127.576
SOUTH KOREA	1.642.383	12	25.666
AUSTRALIA	1.392,681	14	25.364
INDONESIA	1.119.191	16	270.626

**Source:** World Bank Data for 2019. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD>

Yet, rather than only material capabilities, Gök and Karadeniz showed that in ideational and behavioural aspects of middle power features they have similarities making them getting closer and creating MIKTA. They pointed that MIKTA members underlined related niche areas in global governance to pull their efforts together seen in Table 2 (Gök and Karadeniz, 2018; Gök and Karadeniz, 2020).

**Table 2:** MIKTA Members' Niche Diplomacy Preferences Inferred from UN Speeches

MIKTA Country	Australia	Mexico	Turkey	Indonesia	South Korea
<b>Niche areas in global governance underlined in the Speeches</b>	Human Rights Environmental Governance Non-proliferation Development	Mediation UN Peacekeeping Development Cooperation	Mediation Humanitarian Assistance Development Cooperation Peacekeeping	Sustainable Development Disarmament Climate Change Poverty Peacekeeping Financial Assistance to Less Developed Countries	Humanitarian and Financial Assistance Development Cooperation Green Growth Peacekeeping

**Source:** Developed by the author on various statements of Representatives of MIKTA members before the UN General Assembly between 2000 and 2017 period stated in Gök and Karadeniz (2018) work.

Dal and Kurşun rightly predicted that MIKTA's functioning as an efficient middle power platform would depend on the construction of a common social identity as well as its acceptance as a legitimate grouping by external actors (Dal and Kurşun, 2016, p.626). Despite more than forty joint declarations and continuation of the meetings of foreign ministers (17<sup>th</sup> was held in July, 2020), it is discussed that MIKTA has lost its energy as an institution with the fading of 'middle power' moment in global level and domestic political concerns of its members for instance, Australia has changed six prime minister since 2010, Turkey had to struggle with the impacts of coup attempt in 2016, South Korea witnessed its president jailed in 2018, Indonesia and Mexico had presidency elections. Within this context it can be argued that legitimacy of MIKTA in the global governance is started to be questioned.

### 3.1. Critiques on Effectiveness: A Legitimacy Crisis for MIKTA?

Legitimacy for international institutions (IO) is an important component for their life spans. The literature on institutional legitimacy analyses it into three grounds as legal legitimacy, procedural and performance legitimacy. It is underlined that the consent of the states to the creation of the institution, the quality of its decision-making procedures and its ability to enhance the welfare of its members and effective way of producing collective solutions are important for them to gain and preserve legitimacy (Binder and Haupel, 2015, p.240-241). It is asserted that usually due to the lack of fair procedures in the IOs good performance is the most important source of international organizations legitimacy (Binder and Heupel, 2015, p.241). Buchanan and Keohane underline that 'it is important not only that global governance institutions be legitimate, but that they are perceived to be legitimate' (2016, p.407). Hence an institution's legitimacy depends on whether it 'effectively performs the functions invoked to justify its existence' (Buchanan and Keohane, 2016, p.422). In other words, 'performance is the path to legitimacy' (Gutner and Thompson, 2010, p.228). For performance approaches, the legitimacy of an IO derives from its impacts, irrespective of how the institution formulated and executed relevant policy. Output-based legitimacy is where an institution gains its legitimacy from audience satisfaction with its outcome. In other words, legitimacy is based on the instrumental importance of the institution (Dellmuth, Scholte and Tallberg, 2019, p.631). When we analyse MIKTA from this perspective, arguments against MIKTA's relevance for global governance point to its lack of output legitimacy.

For Robertson, 'MIKTA has achieved less than optimists envisioned but longer than pessimists imagined' (Robertson, 2020 a). The confusion about what MIKTA achieves derives from 'its lack of subject specificity'. This also makes it difficult to define MIKTA's purpose. Çolakoğlu (2018) underlined that 'it is difficult to say with certainty the extent to which MIKTA has contributed to addressing any given global issue'. He stresses the importance of issue prioritization of member countries for MIKTA since many regional and global issues from Ebola outbreak to peace in Korean peninsula, are on its agenda. Robertson (2018) criticized MIKTA from the same perspective that 'it doesn't highlight a clear link between aim and initiative'. In chairmanship of each members, there had been attempts to thrive the initiative, however it is argued that after its establishment it lost its dynamic and activeness within the fading 'middle power moment' in global politics and domestic turmoil in member countries (Carr, 2020, p.10). Robertson claims that in changing international environment MIKTA has lost its relevance and became a 'waste of time' (Robertson, 2020 a).

The answers to these critics from MIKTA side could be found in the work of Kim, Hung and Rimmer (2018). Based on interviews from member countries' diplomats their study showed that since its establishment in 2013, MIKTA's 'flexible' and 'issue-oriented approach' on a variety of topics arises from members countries' perception of the group as a 'solutions oriented and force for good' platform rather than as 'a problem-solving mechanism' from the beginning. It is highlighted that MIKTA was not created 'in the context of an urgent problem and no compelling need for it to appear'. Hence MIKTA has been utilized as capacity-building

and diplomatic exchange platform to increase network. This network is thought to increase member countries' visibility in global governance platforms (Kim, Hung and Rimmer, 2018, p.478-479).

In addition to this study, it is visible from MIKTA documents, they emphasize the group's being 'consultative platform' as a diplomatic exchange mechanism and hence its difference from other minilateral arrangements as BRICS. In post-2008 world, member countries in order to mitigate the bad effects of uncertainty in the world order use this informal organization as a tool to increase their voices to be heard. States in order to 'maintain autonomy, closer control of information, lower short-term transaction costs and speed, minimal bureaucracy and manage high uncertainty about other states' preferences or about the state of the world to coordinate their positions without strong commitment within a centralized international organization' tend to use informal organization (Vabulas and Snidal, 2013:209). Hence from this perspective, the flexibility and advantages of information sharing and coordination of policies with like-minded countries at minimum costs is what members make of MIKTA.

However, MIKTA members' diplomats interviewed in Kim's study also accept that 'in multilateral spaces MIKTA remains a concept in the making and coordination among the members is still in its infancy' (Kim, Hung and Rimmer, 2018:483). While the debate on MIKTA's relevance and resilience for global governance has been ongoing, the Covid-19 crisis emerged as a test case of MIKTA's effectiveness both in the eyes of members and international community. In other words, might the Covid-19 crisis take MIKTA at a mature stage as an organization?

### **3.2. The Covid-19 Pandemic: Threat or Opportunity for MIKTA?**

The Covid-19 pandemic has various economic, political and social impacts on MIKTA members like other political groupings and states. For instance, Narlikar (2020) has analysed how the pandemic affected BRICS and concluded that within the BRICS members' cooperation intensive relationship became more visible between pairs of Russia and China on the one hand and on the other, India and Brazil (p.30). In addition, she stated that the pandemic revealed the existing divisions within the grouping and there appeared a line dividing Brazil and India pair from Russia and China. She predicts that with the pandemic's new challenges to BRICS 'its limited impact will weaken further' (Narlikar,2020, p.29,31). Within this framework how the current Covid-19 pandemic affects MIKTA as a political grouping and to what extent it serves as a forum for collective action during the pandemic?

As seen in the table below all MIKTA members have been affected by the pandemic in different ways. They experienced problems both in managing the pandemic and recovering from its economic effects. In statistical terms, at the time of writing, case and death numbers in MIKTA countries since the first case was announced in Wuhan, China are listed in the table 3 below.

**Table 3.** Health Security Index Ranking and the Covid-19 Cases of MIKTA Members

MIKTA Members	Cases of Infections	Death Numbers	Global Health Security Index Ranking (out of 195 countries)
Mexico	579.914	62.594	28
Indonesia	165.887	7.169	30
Korea	19.077	316	9
Turkey	263.949	6.209	40
Australia	25.448	583	4

**Source:** For Covid-19 Cases : Worldometer Info, Coronavirus Update. August 28,2020 <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/> For Global Health Security Index: <https://www.ghsindex.org/report-model/>

As the table depicts Mexico and Turkey are the countries where high numbers of cases have been detected and according to death numbers, Mexico and Indonesia are leading the other members. Statistical data shows South Korea is the one which has been least affected and Australia follows it. According to MIKTA members' place in 2019 Global Health Security Index<sup>3</sup>, this result might be expected since Korea and Australia rank in the top ten countries in the world.

During the pandemic South Korea, Australia and Turkey have intensive aid diplomacy in their neighbourhood. Like in BRICS grouping, we witness dyadic cooperation between South Korea-Australia, Indonesia-South Korea, Turkey – Mexico and Turkey – Indonesia in the area of exchange of medical supplies such as PCR Test Kits and date collection, institutional communication. South Korea has been more successful in managing the pandemic since its death toll is relatively low with its extensive trace, test and treat program. Indonesia was relatively slow than other countries to respond the pandemic and large-scale social restrictions were put into efficiency late. Seoul provided US\$500.000 to Indonesia to form its own test kits and rechargeable power sprayers for sanitation. In addition, they concluded South Korea and Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement to revive their economies in the new normal (Septiari, 2020). In addition to the cooperation to deal with the pandemic, pharmaceutical firms from Indonesia, South Korea and Turkey are working together to develop a vaccine for the virus (Chang-won, 2020). Turkey and Indonesia also exchanged cooperation in Indonesian mission's helping Indonesians living in Turkey. In addition, they had talks for making cooperation in the field of infrastructure in the aftermath of Covid-19 to recover their economies (Mariska, 2020). In Turkey-Mexico dyad, we see Turkish aid agency TIKA's donation to medical supplies to Mexico City such as mobile clinic (Canik ,2020).

At the group level what MIKTA has done during the pandemic is a source of contention. As the virus spread all over the world and WHO declaration of pandemic, MIKTA members issued a joint statement as a response on April 9, 2020. In the statement both countries underlined their commitment to cooperate within both the international and informal organizations such as WHO, the UN Secretary General's initiation of the Global Human Response Plan for Covid-19

3 Global Health Security Index assesses the global health security capabilities in 195 countries in terms of six categories, 34 indicators and 85 sub-indicators. The six categories are : prevention, detection and reporting, rapid response, health system, compliance with international norms and risk environment. For more information: <https://www.ghsindex.org/report-model/>

and Group of 20. In addition, 'cooperation including information-sharing, capacity-building, and technical assistance among members and with other countries' and 'promoting global health, protecting public goods, and strengthening global governance' were underlined (MIKTA Joint Statement, April 2020). Yet, Robertson predicts that at its seven years, in the wake of the Covid-19, MIKTA will face the risk of being neglected (Robertson, 2020a). He asserts that the pandemic brings unexpected risk to MIKTA. Because of its economic impact on the members, the foreign ministries' budgets will be limited and this makes MIKTA receive less attention by respective member governments.

The Covid-19 pandemic impact on global economy inflicted damages on MIKTA members seriously. Lockdowns in managing to contain the virus have damaged emerging countries such as Indonesia and Mexico more than developed countries. They had to leave the lockdowns earlier to overcome high economic consequences such as high unemployment rates (Financial Times, 2020). Despite the success in combating virus, South Korea and Australia economies are also badly damaged. South Korea has entered into recession for the first time since 2003. All members' economic growth rates are expected to decrease at the end of 2020.<sup>4</sup> It is possible that in the post-Covid-19 world there may arise difficulties for member states governments to give attention for MIKTA due to the economic crisis and social unrest within their societies. In informal international organizations 'sustainability depends on the commitment and interest of its participating governments' (Singh and Teo, 2020, p.5). Therefore, in order MIKTA to survive the pandemic the governments should commit themselves to its endurance. In this regard, cooperation in trade in post-Covid 19 period may empower MIKTA's position in the eyes of members' governments to overcome the economic difficulties.

Pant and Jones underlines that South Korea was more successful than the great powers in organizing the testing and contact tracing efforts to contain the virus. In the niche area of 'health governance', with the leadership of South Korea, MIKTA may become more visible in the global arena. Hence despite the pessimistic perspectives, the Covid-19 may bring opportunities to revive the group solidarity.

As seen in the dyadic cooperation within MIKTA, it can be asserted that being a part of cross-continental consultative platform, member countries had the ability to manage aid coordination in times of crises not relying on the support from US-China binary. This is important since both members are close allies of the US in political and security relations and also as Gök and Karadeniz (2020, p.186) showed in terms of trade, other than Mexico which depends on the USA, all members' number one trading partner is China. Despite the dependency on these major actors in the system, their coordination of aid without their help shows their willingness of sustaining the grouping and the importance of minilateral and informal gatherings for global governance in times of crises. In this regard, rather than losing its relevance for changing international

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4 For detailed information of the pandemic on MIKTA members' economies see: For Mexico (Campero and Sandin, 2020), for Indonesia (Rajah and Grenville, 2020), for South Korea (Stangarone, 2020), for Turkey (Demiralp, 2020) and for Australia (O'Sullivan, Rahamathulla and Pawar, 2020)

environment, MIKTA with the advantage of its flexibility as an informal institution has the potential to become an example of ‘middle power diplomacy’ in the post-Covid-19 world.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The uncertainty and anxiety prevailing in world order after the 2008 financial crisis increased with the Covid-19 pandemic to a high level. The IMF report of June 2020’s title summarizes prevailing feeling in today’s world with its title: A crisis like no other, an uncertain recovery! (IMF, 2020) In this atmosphere the pandemic poses both risks and opportunities for the capabilities and preferences of MIKTA members.

The major obstacle for the members to give attention to the grouping and hence the biggest risk for the MIKTA is related with deteriorating economic situation in member countries. As stated in the article, all MIKTA members have to deal with low growth rates and high unemployment numbers due to the precautions against the spread of the pandemic. It is expected that the political and social turmoil make governments more receptive to deal with domestic politics. Moreover, if the impact of the pandemic on the foreign ministries create budget cuts, MIKTA may gain lesser attention in members’ agenda. Yet, despite the risks it is argued that the pandemic presents opportunities for preferences of MIKTA members to strengthen the grouping presence in global governance.

The reasons why the pandemic may be regarded as a chance for MIKTA are manifold. First of all, in the prevailing uncertainty about the future shape of the world, informal institutions are providing necessary tools for states to cope with the challenges in a more flexible way. Minilateralism as a feature of such institutions also becomes important in effectively dealing with the crisis witnessed in today’s world necessitating specialization in niche areas. As seen in the pandemic, some middle powers managed to deal with the health crisis and its consequences better than the others. In the case of MIKTA, we witnessed a sense of solidarity between its members seen in joint ministerial meetings and declarations and also aid cooperation between dyadic members during the crisis. In the political vacuum left after the US withdrawal from WHO, middle powers will gain more space to shape the future of global health governance.

Secondly, South Korea and Australia’s successful performances during the crisis may increase the energy of the institution to play effective roles in humanitarian response, vaccine development and it may act as a bridge in coordinating dispersal of potential vaccine between developed and developing countries in deepening inequality in the world. In addition, Mexico, Turkey and Indonesia have taken different important roles in the UN as a result of the elections held on 17-18 June, 2020. Turkey’s candidate Mr. Volkan Bozkır has been elected as seventy-fifth President of the General Assembly. Mexico is elected to be non-permanent member of the Security Council for 2021-2022 term. Mexico is also together with Indonesia elected as members of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for three years term between 2021 and 2023 (MIKTA Joint Statement, July, 2020). These roles of MIKTA members in the UN increase the individual capacities as well

as strengthen their collective effort in empowering MIKTA's presence in their common niche areas in global governance.

To conclude, as Richard Falk rightly underlines the most important question for the future of global governance is that how the feeling that 'we are all in this together' during the Covid-19 crisis will be kept in other global issues such as climate change, nuclear weaponry, global migration and extreme poverty (Falk, 2020, p.60). Today most scholars agree that states have no choice but cooperation and the global governance needs more inclusivity of all states – middle, great or small powers to overcome transnational issues. Therefore, multilateralism is the best option to rebuild a stronger world and this opens a new space for middle powers in global governance in a second time after post-2008 crisis period. This gives MIKTA a chance to show it has the potential to contribute multilateralism efforts of middle powers in post-Covid world in providing good management and collective solution as an informal grouping and representative of third wave middle power diplomacy. It is clear that now it's time for MIKTA to seize the moment.

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## A Comparative Analysis of the Role of the UN and EU in Multilateral Development Cooperation in the post-2008 Era

### 2008 Sonrası Dönemde BM ve AB'nin Çok Taraflı Kalkınma İşbirliğindeki Rolünün Karşılaştırmalı Analizi

N.Nevra ESENTÜRK\* 

Gonca OĞUZ GÖK\*\* 

#### Abstract

There has been tremendous evolution in terms of both the institutionalization as well as the quantitative increase in multilateral development efforts since the end of the Second World War. Yet, the real qualitative progress of multilateral aid channeled through international organizations (IOs) has always been contested throughout history. Especially after 2008 financial crisis, neoliberal norms of development have been challenged by decreasing fate on democracy, multilateralism as well as competitive alternative models of development cooperation among developing countries of the Global South. In this context, this paper attempts to comparatively examine the policies of two main constitutive IOs, the UN and the EU in multilateral development efforts in the post-2008 era. To this aim, the paper will scrutinize official development aid statistics data from OECD between 2011-2017 in order to assess whether there has been a significant change in their aid efforts. The paper concludes that UN system has continued to be the main actor in the development cooperation funding in 2000s. While the EU still maintains the status of biggest core (direct/non-restricted) donor, the UN increasingly becomes a non-core (sector, program and region-driven) donor of the multilateral development system. Yet, crises of neoliberalism in the changing world order have an impact on the role of these IOs in terms of the implementation of a “rule-based” development cooperation system as well the sustainability of their “normative” actorness.

**Keywords:** Development Cooperation, Multilateralism, UN, EU, Crises of Neoliberalism

#### Öz

İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın ardından çok taraflı kalkınma çabalarında hem kurumsallaşma hem de miktar artışı yönünden önemli bir dönüşüm olmuştur. Ancak, tarih boyunca uluslararası örgütler tarafından sağlanan çok taraflı yardımların niteliksel gelişimi sorgulanmıştır. Özellikle, 2008 finansal krizi sonrasında, neo-liberal kalkınma normları bir taraftan demokrasi ve çok taraflılığa olan inancın azalması, diğer taraftan Güney ülkelerin yükselen alternatif kalkınma işbirliği modelleri gibi meydan okumalarla karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışmada iki temel uluslararası örgüt olan BM ve AB'nin 2008 sonrası dönemde çok taraflı kalkınma çabaları karşılaştırmalı perspektifte analiz

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edilmeye çalışılmıştır. Bu amaçla çalışmada 2011-2017 yılları arasında OECD'nin resmi kalkınma yardımı istatistikleri kullanılarak BM ve AB'nin kalkınma yardımlarında dikkate değer bir değişim olup olmadığı değerlendirilmiştir. Çalışma, BM sisteminin 2000'lerde kalkınma işbirliği yardımlarında temel aktör olarak devam ettiğini göstermiştir. AB çok taraflı kalkınma işbirliği sisteminde hala en büyük doğrudan yardım sağlayan donör iken, BM'nin sektör/proje ve program bazlı kalkınma yardımlarında artış gözlenmiştir. Ancak, değişen dünya düzenindeki neoliberal krizler, özellikle kalkınma işbirliği sisteminin "kurala dayalı" uygulamasında ve "normatif" aktörlüğün sürdürülebilirliğinde uluslararası örgütlerin rollerini etkilemektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kalkınma İşbirliği, Çok Taraflılık, BM, AB, Neoliberalizmin Krizleri

## 1. Introduction

Multilateral development assistance efforts started with decolonization process after the Second World War and institutionalized in the post-Cold War era. The UN agencies, multilateral development banks and the EU have been the principal actors since the Cold War era. Multilateral aid was basically allocated from rich industrialized states to underdeveloped states through international organizations (IOs). As significant IOs, key constituent players of the language as well as the norms of multilateral development efforts have been the UN and the EU. Yet, since the 2000s, multilateral aid architecture has become very complex, with many types of organizations delivering assistance in a variety of forms (Kharas, 2007: 15-16). According to OECD, estimates around forty percent of total aid is channeled through an estimated two hundred multilateral donors and agencies (OECD, 2018a). Yet, donors have begun to rely less on official state channels and there is a growing number of NGOs and private donors such as businesses, foundations and religious groups on aid efforts (Keeley, 2012: 55-59). Furthermore, new rising powers from the Global South such as BRICS have become new rising bilateral donors. Development cooperation among the developing countries of the Global South (or South-South Cooperation) increasingly becomes a new alternative to traditional North-South model that relies on political conditionality for aid (OECD, 2013; OECD, 2015). Especially after 2008 financial crisis, there has been deterioration with regard to the normative appeal of the West and neoliberal norms of multilateralism; market liberalism, human rights and democracy are in sharp decline (Öniş, 2017: 4).

On the other hand, multilateral organizations continue to have a critical role in the development efforts, as they are still the *crucial sources of funding* for developing countries. According to OECD 2018 data, members' total use of the multilateral system reaches almost 70 thousand million US Dollars (OECD, 2018a). Secondly, IOs contribute to the multilateral cooperation system with efforts of *target-setting* and *establishing standards* that is required to create a favorable environment for the policies of multiple actors. In this regard, UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals that "sets" 17-targeted goals on development was adopted by all UN member states in 2015 (UN Sustainable Development Goals, 2015). OECD's The Busan Declaration of 2011 established for the first time an agreed framework on four principles (Busan Partnership Document, 2011) for an effective development co-operation that embraces traditional donors, South-South co-operators, the BRICS, civil society organizations and private funders. These developments then

reveal how at least a “normative consensus” could be reached on “development targets” as well as “shared principles” that underpin all forms of development assistance as a result of debate among various different actors in the changing multilateral aid architecture of 2000s.

In the context of above-mentioned rapid structural transformations in the last two decades, this paper attempts to comparatively examine the contributions of two main constitutive IOs, the UN and the EU in multilateral development efforts in the post-2008 financial crises era. To this aim, the paper will scrutinize the existing official development aid statistics from OECD between 2011-2017 in order to understand whether there has been a significant change in their multilateral aid efforts. Via critically engaging with the EU and the UN’s contributions in multilateral development aid efforts in the post-2008 financial crises era, the paper attempts to open up a discussion of the possible areas for further cooperation between the UN and the EU in development efforts despite limitations.

In order to do that, the first part of the paper will briefly analyze the evolution of the multilateral development system within the framework of the crises of neoliberalism in 2000s. The second part will specifically focus on the policies of the UN and EU in development efforts in order to better understand their specific role in the multilateral development system. The third part will comparatively analyze the UN and EU’s policies in development efforts in the post-2008 era in order to decipher their contributions to multilateral development efforts in the post-2008 era as well as their limitations. The paper concludes that UN system has continued to be the main actor and contributor in the development cooperation funding in the post-2008 era. While the EU still maintains the status of biggest core (direct non-restricted) donor, the UN increasingly becomes the largest non-core (program, sector and region-driven assistance) donor of the multilateral development system (UN ECOSOC Technical Note, 2015). Nevertheless, crises of neoliberalism in the changing world order have an impact on the role of these IOs in terms of the implementation of a “rule-based” development cooperation system as well the sustainability of their “normative” actorness.

## **2. Crises of Neoliberalism and Challenges towards the Multilateral Development Architecture in 2000s**

The establishment of two Bretton Woods institutions, the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1945 under the umbrella of the UN system laid the foundations of multilateral development efforts. With the end of the Cold War, multilateral efforts for development increasingly began to focus on liberal values such as “democratization” and “respect to human rights” as the key themes. The neoliberal practices that were developing since the 1980s such as free market mechanisms, mass-scale privatization of state-owned enterprises and trade liberalization to opening up to international competition increased their popularity in the 1990s (Colander, Holt and Rosser, 2004: 492). The so-called “Washington consensus” (WC), was based on a strong belief in hyper globalization and free markets to sustain economic growth. It

was the offered policy to developing countries by the IMF and the World Bank under the US-led international order in 1990s. Yet, the sustaining economic problems of developing countries in the post-Cold War era were interpreted as the failure of these neoliberal practices and the institutions that implemented them. 1997 Asian Crises was a turning point in terms of growing criticisms towards neoliberal principles. This led to the emergence of a new paradigm defined as “the post-Washington consensus” (PWC) in the early 2000s, an upgraded version of WC. PWC was based on the idea of strong regulatory institutions as well as a growing emphasis on “social policies” to increase the living standards of lower-income segments of the society. Yet, still the post WC has proved to be a continuation or edited version of the neoliberal practices of the WC, which further increased criticisms regarding these institutions and their policy tool-kits as well as their effectiveness (Öniş & Kutlay, 2020: 6-7).

2008 financial crisis has been a turning point in the sense that it has been the latest manifestations of the growing dissatisfaction with the neo-liberal economic paradigm as well as its institutions. Since then the international system has experienced a period of turbulent change in terms of the declining appeal of liberal democracy and the proliferation of populist, and authoritarian tendencies. China’s successful economic development experience in the 2000s has been the most noteworthy challenge to neoliberal dynamics by offering a new and authoritarian version of development model called “Beijing Consensus” (Yağcı, 2016: 30). This emerging development paradigm is argued to rely on two defining principles, namely the “sovereignty” and “flexibility”. The basic logic behind Chinese development model is that countries should not be subject to same set of development criteria, political conditionalities or institutional policies. They could experiment different development policy paths depending on their unique historical or cultural settings (Öniş, 2017: 5). In this new transitional era of the 2010s, mainstream liberal paradigm as well as new political economy paths co-exists together (Öniş & Kutlay, 2020: 7).

In light of the above-mentioned challenges towards neoliberalism, one can identify two main “challenges” towards the traditional Western-centric multilateral development cooperation paradigm since 2008. Firstly, multilateral aid architecture has been challenged by its “own” terms, regarding the problems connected to the both neoliberal norms as well as the practice of multilateral institutions. IOs like the EU is increasingly criticized in terms of their effectiveness as well as favoring political ends rather than development concerns in the allocation of funds. Accordingly, multilateral aid architecture is changing rapidly and there is an ever-increasing demand for private organizations and NGOs to deliver aid. NGOs and other private actors have been at the forefront of mobilizing funds from individuals, businesses and various private actors for a wide range of activities in developing countries (Kharas, 2007: 13-14). Citizens in rich countries increasingly prefer to channel their funds through private organizations, rather than through governments. According to 2018 OECD statistical data, private donors total is almost 7.5 thousand million USD compared to 2.8 thousand million USD in 2009 (OECD Stats, 2018). The shift from public towards private aid has significant implications. Private aid donors are more targeted and selective about the programs they are willing to support. They do not generally provide funds for multi-purpose development programs (Kharas, 2007: 13-14). States are also



becoming more “selective” about the programs they wanted to support compared to direct multilateral channels. In other words, donors increasingly select program specific and country specific aid-non-core contributions – compared to direct allocation to multilateral institutions – core contributions – like the UN. Therefore, there is also a growing demand for “non-core” development aid.

Secondly, there is a strong challenge in the form of emerging alternative model(s) of development cooperation emanated from the rise non-DAC bilateral donors like BRICS countries (Khoras and Rogerson, 2017). These donors are suppliers of international development aid that are outside the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) often referred to as “new”, “emerging”, “non-traditional”, “non-Western” or “non-DAC” (Smith, 2011: 1). Development co-operation from emerging donors significantly increased in 2000s, reaching 17% of total global development co-operation in 2014 (Luijckx and Benn, 2017). However, there is a significant lack of available information or transparent statistics regarding several emerging providers that are not reporting to OECD. Western development aid has generally tied to recipients initiating internal reforms towards the OECD-preferred market economies backed by democratic institutions. As compared to traditional Western donors, rising powers like BRICS prioritize economic ties, trade relations, and security interests, rather than democratic ideals. China differs from traditional Western donors in the sense that China deals bilaterally with central governments and does not give aid to NGOs (Quirk, 2014: 6-7). Another rising donor, for example Turkey’s development efforts are also different from both traditional and rising donors in the sense that Ankara tries to utilize direct contact with local populations. Having said that, although rising donors are not a homogeneous group in terms of their aid policies, they do not have political conditionality on aid as traditional Western donors and prioritize bilateral means. Multilateral aid channels like the EU and UN have increasingly been criticized on the grounds of being highly bureaucratic and slow compared to bilateral aid. Accordingly, the rise of non-DAC bilateral donors, accompanied with huge amount of shift to private aid, they not only add to the resources available for multilateral development assistance, but also to the complexity of the multilateral aid architecture (Kharas, 2007: 5).

Despite these complexities and proliferation of multiple different actors in aid architecture, in the 2010s, at least a “normative consensus” on development targets culminated in some of the critical UN documents, most notably the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Accordingly, the OECD’s Busan Declaration of 2011 establishes for the first time an agreed framework for development co-operation based of the principles of inclusive development partnership, ownership of development priorities by developing countries, focus on results, transparency and accountability that embraces traditional donors, South-South co-operators, the BRICS, civil society organizations and private funders (Busan Partnership Document, 2011). These developments then reveal how a consensus was constructed on development cooperation with respect to multilateral efforts in the 2000s. Based on this background, the next part will specifically focus on the role and policies of the UN and EU in development assistance efforts.

### 3. The Role of the UN in Multilateral Development System

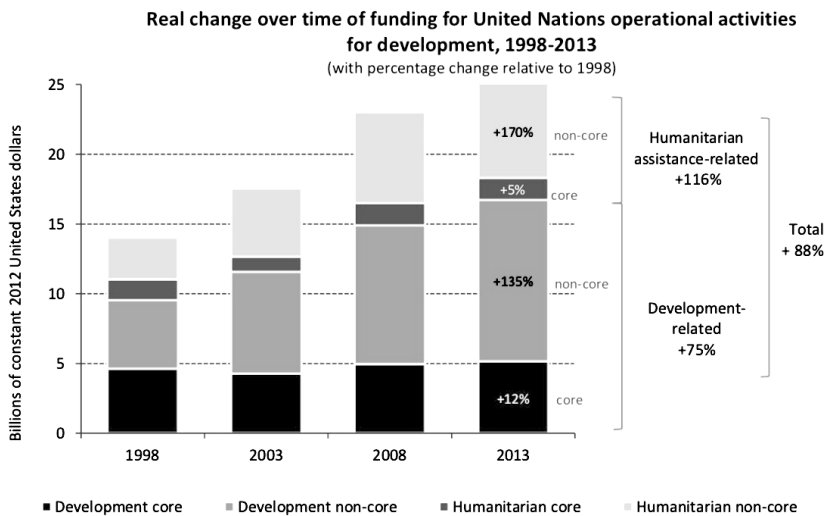
Throughout history, the UN has proved to be both the main actor in development cooperation field and the most criticized one in terms of its accomplishments and failures. The “actors” and also the “issues” of the UN’s development system have evolved to be a complex system. The UN’s development machinery today is composed of the intergovernmental mechanisms of states, specialized agencies, the UN staff and experts, academics, private actors as well as civil society organizations. UN’s Development System is composed of the 34 entities that receive contributions for operational activities for development. There are 12 funds and programs, 13 specialized agencies and 9 other entities (Report of the UN Secretary – Economic and Social Council, 2015). It is in fact a “system” encompassing not only states, but also increasingly different and diverse web of actors. Not only the widening base of actors, but also the issues regarding development has deepened. From the idea of helping the poor and providing aid, the development agenda has evolved to a complex web of interrelated policy areas crosscutting humanitarian emergency aid, long term political and social development, security, climate, environment, trade and investment (Odén, 2010: 269-279).

In this context, the UN’s contributions to multilateral development efforts could best be explained in terms of both normative and material terms. Firstly, in normative terms, the world organization could be described as an “actor” in itself who creates, shapes and redefines ideas on development and set targets since its establishment (Weiss, 2010: 9-13). The opening paragraph of the UN Charter talks about the employment of “international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples” as the world organization’s main aim among others (UN Charter, 1945). The creation of a sub-commission on Economic Development in Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946 was the first attempt to set standards regarding economic development. The UN appears to have made a difference, especially normatively in its contributions to “ideas” on development since 1945. Among others, the formulation of statistical norms and guidelines for development has been one of the crucial contributions of the UN in terms of quantifying the world (Weiss, 2010: 9). UN also has shaped and widened the concept of development to encompass sustainable development, human development, and gender development. Some examples among many are the works of UN Statistical Commission, United Nations Development Programs and the initiation of Human Development, Gender Development Indexes. (UN Human Development Reports) The UN also has tried to bring its ideas and influence by *setting targets goals* to bear on national and international action. The best examples to these are 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and 2015 SDGs. According to Weiss (2010:10-11) setting internationally agreed targets to foster development has been a singular UN achievement. New ideas have also led to the creation of new institution such as UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) for trade, UN Environment Program (UNEP) for sustainability, UN Development Fund For Women (UNIFEM) for gender. Although UN has made a difference in terms of shaping the norms of development and setting the universally agreed development targets, creating new institutions, the results still have been far from success in “materializing” all these development targets (Weiss, 2010: 10-15).

### 3.1. UN as a Non-Core Donor of the Multilateral Development System in 2000s

The UN has been one of the main “funders” of development efforts throughout its history. The world organization’s operational activities for development are funded by a combination of core and non-core resources. Until the early 1990s, the UN’s funding was in the form of core funding, but in 1997, non-core funding exceeded core contributions for the first-time (ECOSOC, 2015). Especially from the early 1990s on, the UN’s funding on development began to increase rapidly. As seen in Figure 1 below, the growth in funding for the UN was generally positive from 1998 to 2013 for both development-related activities and humanitarian assistance-related activities. The growth in core resources was, however, minimal compared with the growth in non-core resources. In other words, the increase in UN’s funding was almost entirely due to a significant increase in its *non-core* resources. The arrival of the MDGs in 2000s further accelerated the trend towards *non-core funding* of the UN development system as donors exhibited greater preference to earmark their contributions to specific development goals (ECOSOC, 2015). As seen in Figure 1, the 2000s also witnessed a major increase in funding for humanitarian assistance, which was mainly again non-core in nature.

**Figure 1: Funding of UN Operational Activities (1998-2013)**



**Source:** Report of the UN Secretary-Economic and Social Council (2015), <https://undocs.org/pdf?symbol=en/A/70/62>

As Figure 1 illustrates, the relative weight of non-core contributions of the UN denotes a changing “actorness” in 2000s as playing the role of *implementing agent* since it is used for the purpose the donor states’ preferences. In fact, such non-core funding tends to be earmarked to specific projects, thereby argued to be limiting the *flexibility* that UN entities have on the use of the funds they receive. According to OECD, non-core funds can also increase the

overall envelope of resources available to multilateral entities, allowing them to engage in a wider range of activities through existing institutional structures (OECD, 2010). In fact, UN specialized agencies have seen this as an opportunity to become *more operational* (Odén, 2010). Yet, the supply of non-core funds can also shift a multilateral organization's overall balance of activities, potentially carrying the risk of weakening its core policies as well as its "multilateral" character. Decreasing core resources has already raised concerns that the UN system is already beginning to lose its *multilateral character* and becoming bilateralised. This in turn makes coordination and coherence of the multilateral development cooperation system more difficult (Muttukumara, 2015: 9). In fact, in terms of non-core contributions, there is a huge change in UN's funds in 2010s and the world organization leads the members' use of the multilateral system with USD 14.127 Million in 2017 (see Table 1).

The growing non-core contributions are also the result of governments' choices to *bypass the multilateral organization* and send aid predominantly through *bilateral* channels. Donors increasingly chose non-core and private funding to exert influence on the activities financed by a multilateral organization in a possibly less bureaucratic way than through its board or equivalent decision-making body (Oden, 2010: 269-279). Bilateral aid and aid through private actors and NGOs are increasingly becoming more welcome as they also increase their expertise and institutionalization in humanitarian field. Regarding the UN, due to highly technical nature of UN's approach to provide inadequate answers to complex problems of developing countries, it is increasingly criticized in terms of its slowness regarding bureaucracy of proving aid. Furthermore, the fragmentation of the UN Development systems with 34 semi-autonomous entities limits its effectiveness in delivering change and creates inefficiencies. Attempts to bring "unity" to the UN Development system through reforms have so far been so slow (Baumann, and Weinlich, 2018: 1-4). There is also the problem of *decreasing belief in the legitimacy* of the UN and its institutions in the last two decades. These most serious failures have taken place in places like Sub-Saharan Africa because of past experiences as well as abuses and crimes of UN personnel experienced by local population.

Therefore, as the UN increasingly becomes an "implementation" agent of development efforts, the "normative" role of it necessarily decreases. In other words, when the donors transform the UN agencies into a "franchising" operation with funds with agendas of their own and more money than the core budget of the agency, it becomes even harder to focus on a set "normative" agenda of its own. In fact, there is an ongoing discussion regarding the balance between the normative vs. operational role of the UN in development field as well as its effectiveness and legitimacy in multilateral governance of development (Odén, 2010: 269-279). In spite of all this, in the economic and social arena, the UN appears to have made a difference, especially in its contributions to ideas on development especially by being a "norm shaper" as well as its actorness in terms of "setting the targets" for both states as well as multilateral organizations like the EU. Yet, ironically the development has been one of the UN's least successful fields in terms of concrete achievements (Weiss, 2010: 10).

#### 4. The Role of the EU in Multilateral Development System

The European Union as a *sui generis* international organization is a formidable aid provider, as it channels around USD 15 billion in aid each year to developing countries, 10% of all the official aid provided globally (OECD, 2018a). Along with the EU member states, United States and the World Bank, the EU as an IO is among the world's largest donors and can have significant effects on developing countries. The EU also has direct cooperation with the UN in development cooperation.

In historical perspective, unlike the UN, EU development policy initially was narrow in scope in that the policy was intended merely to supplement the development policies of individual Member States in 1957. De-colonization, which primarily took place in the EU's early years, sparked demands for a redefinition of the relationship between the Union and the former colonies (Holland, 2002: 3). As a consequence, the First Yaounde´ Convention of Association was agreed as the legal framework governing the relationship between the Union and the so-called Associated African and Malgache Countries (EAMA). Along with subsequent Lome´ Conventions, which together covered the period up until 2000, the First Lome´ Convention of 1976 marked both a geographical widening of the Union's development policy and the inclusion of new areas of cooperation such as trade and aid (Broberg, 2011: 542). Lome´ I was replaced by Lome´ II in 1980 (OJEC L347/1 (1980)), by Lome´ III (OJEC L86/1 (1986)) in 1986, and by Lome´ IV in 1990, which expired in 2000 (OJEC L229/1 (1989)).

Lome´ III and IV provided further widening of the scope of the Union's cooperation with developing countries. In addition to trade and development aid, new policy fields were included in the framework of cooperation. Moreover, a new political dimension was introduced into the framework of EU development policy in that respect for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law was made an integral part of the Union's relations with developing countries. With the inclusion of political conditionality to the development policy, the EU placed particular attention to Latin America and the non-European states having borders with the Mediterranean (Broberg, 2011: 543). But the Hence, the Union concluded broad development agreements with these countries, as well as with India, Pakistan, and the then five ASEAN states of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Thus, EU ODA proceeds globally, but in the context of targeted regional agreements and programs.

Since the late 1990s, EU development policy has been strongly influenced by the Union's attempts to define and establish itself as a strong global actor. The EU's increased attention to security issues has spilled over on to its development agenda in that greater attention has been given to conflict prevention and political emergencies taking place well beyond Europe's borders. This is clearly reflected in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, which replaced Lome´ IV in 2000 (Carbone, 2007: 33; Olsen, 2004: 81). Moreover, with respect to trade, the Cotonou Agreement constituted a marked change from the unilateral trade preferences of the Lome´ conventions in that EU products must also benefit from preferential treatment in African, Caribbean and Pacific

(ACP) countries. The Cotonou Agreement remains in force until December 2020, but subject to revision by the parties every five years.

Recently, EU development policies are guided by the principles of external action, which are set out in Article 21 of the Treaty on the EU of 2009, also known as the Lisbon Treaty. It stipulates that any external action undertaken by the EU as well as the related policy framework shall be guided by the very same principles that were at the core of the EU's own creation: democracy, rule of law, universality, indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, equality and solidarity, as well as respect for principles of the UN Charter and international laws (EEAS, 2016). Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU further narrows down the framework for EU development policies. It defines the primary objective as the reduction and complete eradication of poverty worldwide. It also calls for complementarity, coherence, and mutual reinforcement of development policies of both the EU itself and its member states. Article 210 reinforces the latter by obliging the EU and its member states to coordinate their ODA actions (Art. 208, 210 TFEU, Lisbon Treaty). The above regulations also validate the EU's core targets of poverty eradication in accordance with the UN SDGs and promotion of the EU's democratic values globally. These recent dynamics reveal how the normative dynamics of EU development policy has had the potential to facilitate the use of the multilateral development system.

#### **4.1. EU as a Core Donor of the Multilateral Development System**

Given its colonial history and the fact that the EU is collectively the world's largest donor of ODA with over 50 percent of global ODA disbursement, it is important to figure out how the EU and its member states promote norms within development policies internationally and how the EU cooperates with the UN specifically in the area of development. The material contributions of the EU as a significant donor of the multilateral system has brought fore the geopolitical aspects as well. Recently, the EU's internal and external crisis mode has pushed it to consider these aspects strongly.

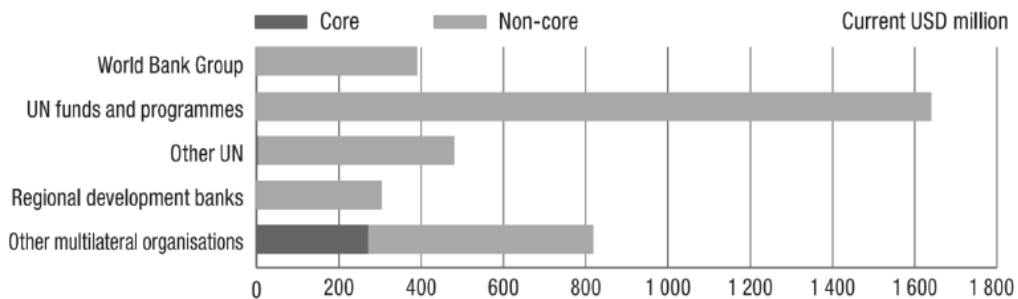
Specifically, at the country level ODA disbursement of EU countries in the period between 2011-2017 can be seen in Annex. In a comparative perspective, it is seen that there is steady increase in EU member states' contribution of ODA in the multilateral development system, except the year 2017. In 2017, while in the overall countries of the EU, there is a small decrease, in the Central and Eastern European countries of Czech Republic, Latvia, Slovakia, Romania, Malta, as well as in Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, France, Sweden and UK, we see a small increase in their amount of ODA disbursement. ODA disbursement of Portugal can be mentioned as a specific case in which there has been a continuous decrease in its amount of ODA since 2011. According to the data, Cyprus did not provide any ODA in the years 2016 and 2017. This data reveal how the crisis of neoliberal dynamics have has an impact on EU member states' contribution to the multilateral development cooperation system.

On the financing side of EU development policy, the EU has set up targeted funds and programs, which operate regionally and under a multi-annual framework that stretches from 2014 to 2020.

The main financial channels of EU ODA are the European Development Fund (ca. € 30.5 billion for the period 2014–2020), which targets ACP countries, the Development Cooperation Instrument for Latin America and Asia (ca. € 20 billion) as well as the European Neighborhood Policy, which covers 16 Southern and Eastern European states and is worth around €15 billion (Beringer, et al., 2019: 8). These figures indicate the importance of the EU as a significant player of international development, providing core funding to the multilateral development system. Not surprisingly, the EU is also highly engaged in multilateral fora and efforts, actively supporting *inter alia* the fulfillment of the former UN MDGs and likewise the agenda-setting for the development of a follow-up framework, adopted in the form of the SDGs in 2015 (European Commission, 2016a). With the implementation of a new Consensus on Development in 2017, the EU aligned its development policy with the SDGs and reaffirmed its commitment to a rules-based global order. At the same time, the EU announced that it is seeking to replace traditional donor-recipient relationships with partnerships that will be based on common interests and shared principles. This indicates EU's commitments to the multilateral development cooperation system.

At the operational level, the EU has direct engagement with UN, which is significant for EU's legitimacy and its engagement on matters related to EU's strategic interests and operational priorities in line with 2016 Global strategy of the EU (Medinilla, et. al., 2019). Once the EU and member states' funding for the UN system is analyzed, it is seen that the EU is often put as being the single largest financial contributor to the UN system, including both the EU institutions and EU member states. The OECD's 2018 Multilateral Development Finance Report notes the increasing importance of multilateral institutions as significant funders to other multilateral organizations (OECD, 2018a: 21). Overall, one should note that the EU institutions and its member states provide almost one quarter of all financial contributions to the UN funds and programs. On the other hand, unlike the DAC members, *the EU institutions do not provide core funding to UN bodies*. The EU channels a significant proportion of its bilateral ODA through multilateral organizations (OECD, 2018b). Below Figure 2 indicates that the UN funds and programs benefit the most from the EU's contribution to multilateral organizations.

**Figure 2:** Core and Non-Core Contributions from the EU to Multilateral Organizations by cluster (2016)



**Source:** OECD (2018a), <http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-topics/Multilateral-Development-Finance-Highlights-2018.pdf>



Beyond the overall funding to the UN, according to the 2018 OECD-DAC peer review of the development cooperation, EU member states can provide core or multi-funding to the same organizations like the UN with respect to the added value for the EU institutions (OECD, 2018b: 61). For instance, within the perspective of the external action instrument part of the Multi-annual financial framework 2021-27, some member states such as Belgium proposed to include the possibility of giving core funding contributions to UN entities.

The discussion above reveal that the EU is not only a main driver in the renewal of the multilateral development agenda and a significant contributor to the UN system, it also continuously modernizes and redesigns its own ODA policy framework in response to the changing global context, which is characterized by the new geography of poverty, the emergence of donor countries from the Global South, additional financing options provided by private funds, as well as new global threats to development, such as climate change. The EU's Agenda for Change, implemented in 2011, introduced yet another new framework that significantly changed its ODA policy development and disbursement (European Commission, 2016b). Curtailing the policy priorities of human rights, democracy, and good governance, as well as inclusive and sustainable economic growth, the new guidelines stipulated a stronger differentiation of partner countries' actual needs leading to a concentration of EU ODA on the support of the most fragile of developing countries. Thus, the EU has become pragmatic in its choice of partner countries and organizations that offer the optimum added value on the ground.

## **5. The UN and EU's Contributions to Multilateral Development Efforts: A Comparative Analysis**

According to OECD 2018 Development Cooperation Report, currently, the total use of the multilateral system (core as well as the non-core resources) represents USD 41.679 million while the bilateral projects USD 75.883 million (OECD, 2018a). Over these flows, in 2017 EU Institutions corresponds to nearly USD 13 millions of core contributions, while the WB follows with USD 7.6 million, and the UN agency, fund and commissions corresponds to USD 5.7 million-core funding (OECD, 2018a) (See Table 1). On the other hand, in terms of non-core contributions, UN leads the members' use of the multilateral system with USD 14.127 million in 2017. The arrival of the MDGs in 2000 and later SDGs in 2015 further accelerated the trend towards non-core funding of the UN development system as donors exhibited greater preference to earmark their contributions to specific development goals, therefore preferred non-core contributions.

**Table 1:** OECD Members Total Use of the Multilateral System (USD-Millions)

	2011		2017	
	Core	Non-Core	Core	Non-Core
<b>Multilateral Organizations</b>	36 254.935	14 457.275	39 684.379	22 624.993
<b>UN agency, fund or commission</b>	4 832.347	8 538.454	5 789.839	14 840.357
Food and Agricultural Organization	178.108	337.249	180.014	371.007
United Nations	284.334	20.843	340.990	36.055
United Nations Children's Fund	478.764	1 208.007	611.130	2 094.775
United Nations Development Program	630.675	1 190.992	517.812	1 502.342
UN High Commissioner for Refugees	341.623	1 204.713	385.884	2 296.882
World Food Program	282.604	2 380.114	293.987	4 631.814
<b>European Union Institutions</b>	12 335.066	562.139	13 127.071	1 013.825
<b>World Bank Group (WB)</b>	8 729.281	2 545.695	7 646.663	2 964.175

**Source:** OECDStats (2018), <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=MULTISYSTEM>

As illustrated in Table 1, the UN system has continued to be the main actor in the development cooperation funding in the 2000s with its share of over twenty thousand million USD. Among its contributions, the share of non-core contributions almost doubled from 2011 to 2017, while there has been a slight increase in terms on core contributions. Among the UN's contributions, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and (United Nations Development Program (UNDP) got the largest funding in both core and non-core contributions. Therefore, UN increases its role as a non-core donor; while EU institutions continue to be the core donor of the multilateral aid system in 2000s. There has been a slight increase in EU's non-core contributions, compared to 2011. Yet the biggest share continues to be core findings in EU's multilateral development efforts. On the other hand, as illustrated in Table 1, the United Nations development system accounts for more than thirty percent of the total (core+non-core) multilateral funding, as reported by OECD/DAC and followed by European Institutions.

In the light of systemic changes and challenges towards neoliberalism, the strength of the UN's role continues to be its universal character compared to other actors in the development field. In this regard, this "universality" also gives the UN a special "legitimacy" as well as a perceived neutrality vis-à-vis national power politics as a global governance institution. As Stokke points out, that the biggest contribution of the UN to development and development cooperation was "to generate and successfully promote globally a holistic development concept, almost consistently keeping the social and human dimensions of development at the core" (Stokke, 2009: 510).

Yet, decreasing "core contributions" challenges the UN system's flexibility to act as well as its multilateral character (Fues et. al., 2007). In other words, the world organization's development efforts have become *highly dependent upon* the specific program and policy choices of its member states. This constitutes a de facto bilateralisation of the UN development system whereby the

UN acts as “short-term contractor” for donors rather than being a development actor in its own right and agenda (Baumann and Weinlich, 2018: 1-4). Furthermore, South-South cooperation has become one of the top priorities of the UN in development field. The UN system as a whole has also been challenged by the latest crises of Coronavirus pandemic. UN agencies like World Health Organization (WHO) is increasingly criticized and United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has yet to take a unified action together towards the pandemic. Therefore, increasing criticisms towards the UN’s legitimacy and effectiveness in general has the potential to affect its “normative” power role in multilateral governance of development. The lack of a sufficiently forceful mechanism to implement the UN declarations and commitments as well as resistance to UN reform continues to be core problems. As UN increasingly becomes an “implementation” agent of states that seek status in global governance, the intended “normative” role of UN agencies necessarily decreases. This increases the crucial role of further cooperation between core contributors like the EU and the UN for the fate of multilateral development system as well as its norms.

The discussion of EU development cooperation policy centers on the nexus of norms and geopolitical dynamics in its evolution. Although the EU has expanded its development cooperation policy as a distinct instrument of its external policy supporting the EU’s global ambitions, the policy area is strictly challenged by external and internal challenges and geopolitical dynamics. This overall limits EU’s role in multilateral development cooperation. The evolution of EU development policy and the related figures in the paper reveal that EU development policy has emerged to be an expression of the EU’s “actorness” with its normative alignment with the multilateral cooperation system. The figures indicate the importance of the EU as a significant player of international development, providing core funding to the multilateral development system, and non-core funding to the UN system. The EU increasingly channels funding to specific purposes in line with its internal and strategic interests. This trend towards more earmarking can also be observed in individual EU member state contributions (OECD, 2018a).

On the other hand, there are certain limitations of the EU in its development cooperation policy such as coherence, effectiveness and complementarity. The significant increase in refugee and migration streams, terror attacks, and the rise of populist tendencies income have led to a reevaluation of the policy priorities. There is no doubt that these contextual challenges and the recent crises of neoliberal dynamics of the EU have made the picture more complex with respect to the governance of multilateral development cooperation. The EU in an evolutionary process has increased its commitments towards the MDGs and SDGs, this overall complements UN’s universal role in multilateral development cooperation system. Thus, SDGs can be seen as a common ground for the EU and the UN to work together. This normative alignment between these two organizations would likely to further EU’s continued commitment to a rules-based multilateralism provide a strong principled basis for its engagement with the UN.

## 6. Conclusion

This study aims at understanding the contributions of the UN and the EU in multilateral development efforts in the context of the crises of neoliberalism in 2000s in a comparative perspective. The paper concludes that there has been a shift from core (direct) to non-core (program and country specific) aid channels, and these changes have been the defining characteristics of multilateral development efforts in the 2000s. The EU still maintains the biggest core donor of the multilateral development system, while the UN keeps its role as the largest non-core donor of the development system. The crises of neoliberal dynamics in the changing world order have an impact on the role of these IOs in terms of the implementation of a “rules-based” development cooperation system as well the sustainability of their “actorness”. At a time of decreasing fate on multilateralism as well as the fortunes of neoliberal values, rising authoritarianism and competitive successful alternatives for development from the global South increasingly challenges multilateral efforts on development.

Yet, these challenges to neoliberalism and its norms also have the potential to bring “new ideas” and areas for cooperation and push for a reform for a more “egalitarian” development cooperation system. In fact, both the both UN and the EU stated their commitments to the 2015 UN SDGs as well as 2011 Busan Partnership principles. There is no doubt that development funding will continue to increase; however, the success of the UN and EU will depend on how they adopt to the changing dynamics, invest more in their cooperation strategically. Furthermore, in a context of changing power dynamics towards rising powers, decreasing willingness on the side of the US to support the UN, and a decreasing fate on multilateralism in general, the EU and its member states seems to have an interest in financing the UN as well as pushing for more stronger autonomy of the UN system as a whole (Baumann and Weinlich, 2018: 1-4). The EU needs to strengthen its role a normative player in the international system and deepen its cooperation with the UN in the area of development. In fact, in her speech before a 2017 UN Security Council Meeting, Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy contended “European Union’s voluntary contributions to the United Nations funds and agencies amount to half of its total budget. This means we proudly and smartly invest in them as much as the rest of the world combined. We believe that it is in our best interests to do so” (Medinilla, et al., 2019). The EU can support UN autonomy by stepping up its “core contributions” and therefore slowing down *de facto* “bilateralisation” of the UN Development System (Baumann and Weinlich, 2018: 1-4).

All in all, the UN with its universal character could serve as an important platform for opening up a “contestation” or broader global debate over the weaknesses of Bretton Woods institutions and the norms of WC in creating a more egalitarian system. That might also help the UN to revitalize its authority and legitimacy as a normative actor in general and multilateral development efforts more specifically. Considering the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the UN has an important potential role to play in order to facilitate cooperation among the parties of development cooperation (Manservisi, S., 2020). Yet, the pandemic is both an opportunity and a test for the relevance of

the UN's leadership when the world is in urgent need of multilateral solutions. This study has attempted to open up a discussion on the roles of EU and the UN in multilateral development efforts in a transition period to a post-liberal era. Further studies might focus on quantitative comparative analyses by incorporating other regional organizations and development banks to decipher a complete picture of the changing dynamics of multilateral aid architecture.

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## ANNEX

## EU Countries ODA-USD Million (2011-2017)

Location	• 2011	• 2012	• 2013	• 2014	• 2015	• 2016	• 2017
Austria	1 001.8	1 056.4	1 065.9	1 100.3	1 381.0	1 687.9	1 251.3
Belgium	2 469.1	2 159.7	2 055.1	2 172.6	2 002.9	2 383.9	2 196.2
Bulgaria	43.6	36.9	45.5	44.4	41.4	68.9	62.2
Cyprus	33.9	23.2	18.7	16.9	18.5	-	-
Czech Republic	207.5	198.3	187.9	195.7	215.0	275.9	304.1
DAC Countries	121 876.1	117 311.4	123 496.4	125 475.9	133 233.5	147 554.8	147 160.3
Denmark	2 547.7	2 469.2	2 581.5	2 622.1	2 669.6	2 449.6	2 448.0
Estonia	23.0	23.1	28.6	33.9	36.3	46.0	43.0
Finland	1 264.0	1 246.6	1 279.9	1 434.2	1 326.9	1 088.4	1 083.8
France	11 021.1	10 906.4	9 877.1	9 204.3	9 264.6	9 873.0	11 330.9
Germany	12 634.2	12 358.8	12 902.9	14 774.4	18 764.7	25 603.6	25 005.1
Greece	328.9	275.3	199.3	210.2	243.4	377.9	313.6
Hungary	119.9	110.1	115.2	130.2	165.5	211.6	148.7
Ireland	818.8	767.2	767.4	742.2	727.2	821.3	838.0
Italy	3 721.7	2 512.6	3 011.8	3 489.2	4 128.7	5 218.6	5 658.0
Latvia	17.3	20.0	21.4	22.4	24.5	31.7	31.9
Lithuania	46.7	49.6	45.9	41.0	51.7	60.8	59.2
Luxembourg	364.9	375.3	384.5	369.3	380.2	407.1	424.2
Malta	18.0	17.2	16.7	18.6	16.8	20.9	25.0
Netherlands	5 426.0	5 037.3	4 738.7	4 850.0	5 913.6	5 121.3	4 958.4
Poland	347.9	376.3	421.8	388.7	449.8	705.4	679.5
Portugal	620.7	553.1	440.3	385.3	323.4	355.1	380.7
Romania	147.8	131.5	122.6	194.9	160.1	206.6	219.5
Slovak Republic	71.3	70.6	73.4	71.2	87.0	109.4	119.2
Slovenia	54.1	54.3	54.5	54.1	65.8	84.2	75.8
Spain	3 460.6	1 826.4	2 030.7	1 627.4	1 441.2	4 358.8	2 560.3
Sweden	4 688.3	4 528.9	4 795.4	5 309.3	7 266.8	5 006.7	5 563.3
United Kingdom	12 227.7	12 232.4	15 656.9	15 757.0	16 281.8	17 574.7	18 103.4

Source: OECDStats (2018), <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=MULTISYSTEM>

## Global Climate Governance between State and Non-State Actors: Dynamics of Contestation and Re-Legitimation

### Devlet ve Devlet-dışı Aktörler arasında Küresel İklim Yönetişimi: Çekişme ve Yeniden Meşrulaştırma Dinamikleri

Bengü AYDIN DİKMEN\* 

#### Abstract

Global climate governance is one of the most complex global governance systems that is also ridden with divergent interests of states and non-state actors. Since the 2000s, the authority of UN-led global climate governance has been contested by the states declining their mitigation targets of the Kyoto Protocol and by those that find the international climate negotiations inefficient to ramp up climate action. These divergent views of states resulted in the counter-institutionalization apparent in the proliferation of minilateral forums and hybrid coalitions of climate initiatives oftentimes bringing states and non-state actors together. These non-UNFCCC partnerships have functioned to be strategic actions that put pressure on the global climate governance system to re-legitimize itself. Meanwhile, transnational actors have also contested the same system demanding a deeper cooperation that will keep the temperature goal below 2 degrees. This study argues that with its new mode of governance named hybrid multilateralism, the Paris Agreement was actually an institutional adaptation to the contestations by states and non-state actors in the forms of counter-institutionalization and politicization. It also discusses the problematic sides of the functions that non-state actors are expected to provide in this new governance mode. This paper is composed of four parts: firstly, the theoretical background that feeds into the analysis of empirical data with regard to global climate governance will be presented. Secondly, beginning from the Rio Conference, milestone developments in global climate governance will be examined by taking the contestation by the states into consideration. In the third part, the process of the politicization of climate change in which transnational actors and specifically the climate change movement demanded more decisive climate action will be explicated. In the last part, the existing legitimacy deficits with regard to non-state actors in post-Paris climate governance will be elaborated.

**Keywords:** Global Climate Governance, Paris Agreement, Legitimacy, Non-State Actors, Civil Society

#### Öz

Küresel iklim yönetişimi, devlet ve devlet-dışı aktörlerin farklı çıkarlarıyla dolu en karmaşık küresel yönetişim sistemlerinden biridir. 2000'lerden beri BM liderliğindeki küresel iklim yönetişiminin otoritesi, Kyoto Protokolü'nden gelen azaltım hedeflerini reddeden devletler ve uluslararası iklim

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müzakerelerini iklim eylemini geliştirmek için yetersiz bulan devletlerce sorgulandı. Devletlerin bu farklı görüşleri, minilateralist forumlar ve sıklıkla devlet ve devlet-dışı aktörleri bir araya getiren melez koalisyonların meydana getirdiği iklim inisiyatiflerinin artışında görülebilen bir karşı-kurumsallaşmayla sonuçlandı. Birleşmiş Milletler İklim Değişikliği Çerçevesi (BMİDÇ)-dışı bu ortaklıklar, kendini yeniden meşrulaştırması için küresel iklim yönetim sisteminin üstünde baskı kuran stratejik eylemler olma işlevi gördü. Diğer yandan, ulusötesi aktörler de ısınma artışını 2 derecenin altında tutacak daha derin işbirlikleri talep ederek bu sistemi zorladı. Bu çalışma, hibrit çoktarafılık adındaki yeni bir yönetim moduyla Paris Anlaşması'nın, aslında devlet ve devlet-dışı aktörleri tarafından ortaya konan karşı-kurumsallaşma ve politikleştirme şekillerindeki çekişmelere kurumsal bir adaptasyon olduğunu savunmaktadır. Ayrıca yeni yönetim itibariyle devlet-dışı aktörlerden beklenen işlevlerin sorunlu yanlarını tartışmaktadır. Makale dört bölümden oluşmaktadır: öncelikle, küresel iklim yönetimine dair ampirik verinin analizini besleyen teorik arka plan sunulacaktır. İkinci olarak, Rio Konferansı'ndan başlayarak küresel iklim yönetiminin dönüm noktası niteliğindeki gelişmeler devletlerin meydan okumaları dikkate alınarak incelenecektir. Üçüncü bölümde, ulusötesi aktörlerin ve özellikle de iklim değişikliği hareketinin daha kararlı bir iklim eylemi talep ederek iklim değişikliğini politikleştirme süreçleri anlatılacaktır. Son bölümde, Paris-sonrası iklim yönetiminde devlet-dışı aktörleri ilgilendiren meşruiyet sorunları ele alınacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Küresel İklim Yönetimi, Paris Anlaşması, Meşruiyet, Devlet-Dışı Aktörler, Sivil Toplum

## 1. Introduction

Climate change is perhaps the most pressing global challenge that has no borders, and requires all countries to work in coordination. Some even think that “managing climate change is the definitive test of global governance” (Beeson 2019, p. 49). Although there has been international cooperation with regards to climate change at the interstate and non-state levels, it is far from being enough. The amount of global greenhouse gas emissions continues to increase and the mitigations by the states will not suffice to keep the temperature rise well below 2 °C degrees that the post-Paris Agreement climate governance recommended. Scientific findings warn that depending on the aggregate calculation of countries' current Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), by 2100, global warming will be 2 – 4.9°C (median 3.2°C) compared to pre-industrial levels (Raftery et al. 2017). Thus, there is a huge emissions gap (Chan et al. 2019). After almost thirty years, the global governance of climate change has frequently stumbled, partly due to the structural deficiencies of global governance, and partly due to the complex nature of climate change. Yet, the 2015 Paris Agreement was hailed by many as a good way out from the climate crisis.

By utilizing empirical evidence, this paper aims to elaborate on global climate governance from Michael Zürn's theoretical perspective of contestation and change in global governance (2018a; 2018b). Departing from the authority-legitimacy relationship in global governance, Zürn identifies certain structural deficiencies of global governance systems (2010; 2013; 2018a). As a result of these challenges, obstacles to global governance can occur, causing it to begin to decline or to re-legitimate itself through institutional reforms depending on the direction of the contestations.

After years of gridlock in the international climate regime, the Paris Agreement was adopted at a universal level and institutionalized new modes of governance. Certain dynamics are evident, playing out for the embodiment of such novelty. Following Zürn, this paper aims to demonstrate that the Paris Agreement was an institutional adaptation to the contestations by states and non-state actors since the early 2000s. Additionally, the paper sheds light on the following questions: How should we evaluate non-state actors with their newly assigned role in the post-Paris era of hybrid multilateralism? Does the post-Paris global climate governance still suffer from legitimacy deficits and get contested?

In this paper, it is intended to evaluate the historical course of global climate governance before the Paris agreement through the analytical tools of contestation, namely *counter-institutionalization* and *politicization* (Zürn, 2018a; 2018b). This overview of global climate governance will discuss the contestation of policy actors at two levels: a) multilateral level that emphasizes the role of states, that can be discussed in the process of counter-institutionalization, b) transnational level that highlights the role of non-state actors in the form of politicization.

However, the paper also suggests that the homogenizing discourse of putting highly differentiated sectors, organizations and institutions, which sometimes consist of states, under the umbrella of non-state actors does not easily fit in the politicization process. I argue that some non-state actors contribute to the contestation of the global climate governance system in a differentiated way, allowing for strategies of both processes: counter-institutionalization and politicization.

This article proceeds in four parts. First of all, it is needed to discuss the theoretical background that feeds into the analysis of empirical data with regard to global climate governance. Secondly, an overview of UN-led climate governance will be given by describing a number of milestone developments from Rio to Madrid conferences. In this part, the analysis level will be the states challenging the UNFCCC's governance modes by promoting alternative or competing ones (counter-institutionalization). Challenges by non-state actors (such as public-private partnerships) will be mentioned as a differentiated contestation "in limbo". In the third part, the institutional and political developments with regards to the pressure from transnational actors on global climate governance (politicization) will be examined. Lastly, the post-Paris climate governance will be evaluated in terms of legitimacy so as to elaborate on the current and future dynamics of contestation on the part of non-state actors.

## **2. Dynamics of Contesting Global Governance: Between Fragmentation and Decline**

Michael Zürn defines global governance as "the exercise of authority across national borders justified with reference to common goods or transnational problems" although global common goods are not necessarily served right in practice (2018b, p. 138). He also normatively defines global governance as a multi-level governance where the global level should be autonomous (that is, where consensual decision-making is less applied), and be part of a system occurring as a result of the interplay of different levels with stratified or functional differentiation (Zürn,

2010). Moreover, global governance addresses not only the states but also societal actors, so they make up a double constituency (Zürn, 2010, 2018b). Thus, it is normatively accountable to both national and transnational publics (Zürn, 2004, 2018b).

Relying on the notion of reflexive authority, Zürn conceptualizes global governance as a dialectical interaction between the holders of power and authority, and the affected parties that are bound by the exercise of that authority (2004, 2010, 2013, 2018a, 2018b). In doing so, global governance can be examined as a dynamic and contingent system, rather than a fixed and top-down regime. This conceptualization of global governance acknowledges the power and will of the parties vis-a-vis the global governance system. However, Zürn identifies two major legitimation problems that the current global governance “endogenously” generates: technocratic bias and power bias (2018a; 2018b). Firstly, since there is no centralized meta-authority in the global governance system, but rather, a loosely coupled issue-specific institutions, justifications for different institutions responsible for different sector-related, technocratic issue areas are limited. Furthermore, this raises questions of legitimacy, especially for the societal actors affected by global governance in the absence of a multi-level global governance (Zürn, 2010, 2013). Specific issue areas are more relevant to the interested publics in that area; however, especially in cases of disputes between areas, a central authority responsive to its public(s) through the accountability notion is needed for decision-making, which is not applicable to the inter – or transnational institutions of global governance. This technocratic bias is at alarming levels in the face of increasing proliferation of such institutions.

Second legitimation problem is about the separation of powers. Originating from the Westphalian notion of sovereignty, the formal equality of the constituent members is the building block of global governance. However, as inter – or transnational institutions are embodied and carried out through power dynamics affected by substantial resources, economically powerful countries might simultaneously make laws (enjoying greater leverage in the negotiations) and execute institutional decisions and procedures (international authorities lack the power of implementation themselves) (Zürn, 2018a, 2018b). This then leads to the reproduction of the existing structural injustices between developed and developing countries. Aside from the legitimacy problem, it also results in the compliance issues in global governance, as the powerful parties might be reluctant to show deference.

Thus, major deficiencies of global governance can be summarized as legitimacy, coordination and compliance problems according to Zürn (2010). Relating to these structural deficits, Zürn proposes that global governance can be contested in two ways: counter-institutionalization and politicization. Counter-institutionalization is the response of states within the global governance system, which, without overtly deviating from the institution or exiting it, tend to establish or support new institutions so as “to influence or replace existing ones” (Zürn, 2018b, p. 142). If the inter – or transnational institution has high authority level, efforts of counter-institutionalization increase. Both established and rising powers can apply counter-institutionalization for the purpose of either decreasing or increasing the ambition of international cooperation. Established powers

can contest the international authorities when dissatisfied with the formal equality of states due to the consensual decision-making in these institutions, because materially weak states can use veto power, leading to undesirable policy outcomes affecting the domestic policies of established powers. This may also result in negotiation gridlock. On the other hand, rising powers can also involve with counter-institutionalization by denouncing the international authorities for Western biasness.

Furthermore, the non-state/societal actors at the transnational level contest the global governance system through the politicization of global issues or authorities, which can occur in the form of either resistance or support (Zürn, 2004, 2018a, 2018b). The degree of politicization depends on the salience of the matter in public debates or protests. The higher the authority level of international institutions, the greater the politicization level (Zürn, 2018b, p. 141). Both the state and societal contestations of inter – or transnational institutions get a response in some form. The contested institution can continue its operations in business-as-usual, then the cooperation might lead to gridlock, and finally, decline. Alternatively, the institution can revise its institutional design, reform its governance mode, etc., in order to re-legitimate itself against delegitimation (Zürn, 2018a).

Before coming to the application of Zürn's theory of global governance on climate change, we need to clarify some definitions that will be used in further discussion. As a notion, the global governance of climate change is nowadays an empty signifier for many scholars due to the complexity and proliferation of climate institutions (Lederer, 2015). It is asserted that global climate governance is "not only highly complex but also strongly segmented and partially fragmented" (p. 6). As will be shown in the following section, global climate governance has had a fragmented character right from the beginning (Zürn, 2018a, p. 189). Zelli and van Asselt takes fragmentation as "the growing diversity and challenges to coordination among private and public norms, treaties and organizations that address a given issue area of international politics" (2015, p. 121). Yet, the fragmentation of global governance does not have to be a negative feature by default; it is just a functional reflection of complexity of modernity (in the sense of expertise in different issue-specific institutions) (Zürn and Faude, 2013, p. 126-127). However, if fragmentation of global governance leads to the failure to coordinate its mechanisms, it can result in an unpleasant situation for international cooperation and thus global governance as some actors can exploit it "to pursue their parochial interests through forum shopping and regime shifting" (p. 125).

Therefore, in the absence of effective coordination, fragmentation of global governance might eventually result in further fragmentation and decline of global governance. Counter-institutionalization of states then poses risks for global governance, unless the underlying objections to the institution are properly addressed by the authority holders. In the following part, the empirical evidence on global climate governance will be scrutinized through the theoretical and conceptual framework provided above. The following section will expose the milestone developments in global climate governance, while simultaneously discussing the state contestation through counter-institutionalization, then we will elaborate on the societal

contestation through politicization in order to evaluate whether the governance mode adopted with the Paris Agreement can be counted as an institutional response of the UNFCCC.

### **3. Global Climate Governance and Counter-Institutionalization**

Global climate governance has developed through three succeeding models each of which was realized in a dialectical way: The Kyoto Protocol, Copenhagen Accord and the Paris Agreement (Held and Roger, 2018). The institutional skeleton of global climate governance was laid in the first international climate convention, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) signed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. In 1994, it was ratified by 195 Parties. The Rio Convention stated the objective of the Parties as to “stabilize greenhouse gas emissions at a level that would avoid dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (Article 2, UNFCCC). Countries signing the climate convention thus recognized the responsibility of the humankind in changing the atmospheric balances of greenhouse gases. However, from the beginning, the main subject of discussion was over who should take the responsibility for climate change (Nasiritousi and Bäckstrand, 2019, p. 27). Due to the consensual nature of decision making in the UNFCCC, such politically debatable issues were vetoed. After long negotiations, the notion of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) was accepted. However, the Convention has non-legally binding obligation for developed countries to return their greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2000, without further substantializing the overall objective (van Asselt, Huitema and Jordan, 2018, p. 28).

The Kyoto Protocol (KP) was signed in 1997. Based on the CBDR notion of Rio Convention, the Protocol obliged the developed countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions because of their historical responsibility in causing climate change. Thus, the KP assigned legally binding emissions limitation or reduction targets to the developed countries. However, alongside the sticks (emissions reductions), a number of carrots were offered; in order to incentivize countries to meet their targets of reductions of national emissions, three flexibility mechanisms were presented for diverse market-based interests (van Asselt et al., 2018, p. 29). These are Emissions Trading (ET), Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI). Despite these incentives, some developed countries, such as the United States, refused to accept that the emissions by the developing countries were treated under different scheme. The former US president George W. Bush stated the US would not ratify the KP in 2001, arguing that the treaty’s emissions reduction targets excluded its greatest competitor China, risking the competition power of the US in global trade markets. Yet, ratified by 192 Parties, the KP entered into force in 2005 after a difficult eight-year ratification process.

Twenty years ago, the Kyoto Protocol was viewed as the “only game in town” (Dingwerth and Green, 2015, p. 153), just before the emergence of transnational climate governance. However, a significant number of bilateral or multilateral forums outside the auspices of the UNFCCC



emerged after the aforementioned announcement by the US. (Bäckstrand, Kuyper, Linnér and Lövbrand, 2017, p.563). The Cambrian explosion of climate governance occurred in the 2000s (Dingwerth and Green, 2015). In fact, states have created more than 60 non-UNFCCC climate institutions over time (Rowan, 2019). Since then, global climate governance began to be fragmented.

Alongside the “fragmenters”, i.e. states that advocate against mitigation targets due to its costs to the economy and therefore resist the UN-led climate governance, there are also “deepeners”, i.e. states that advocate ambitious climate action by opting for the decarbonization of their economies, and are therefore dissatisfied with the stalemate in the UN negotiations (Rowan, 2019, p. 7). Both of these sides challenged the UN-led global climate governance for their own reasons, and founded or participated in the non-UNFCCC climate initiatives in parallel with their climate policy (Rowan, 2019). These non-UNFCCC institutions consisting of public and private transnational initiatives reflected a general trend of multistakeholderism in the world (p. 89) (see following subsection). These initiatives do not apply to its members and partners legally binding obligations, and use soft law and instruments in the management of their goals (p. 89-90). Although the UNFCCC and its Conference of the Parties (COPs) remained as the central global climate governance institution because of its universal membership and the normative objective of fighting against the global challenge of climate change (p. 60), these new institutions decreased the authority of the UNFCCC and challenged its position “as the epicenter of climate regime” (Bäckstrand et al., 2017, p. 564).

With regard to the important venues of newly founded small clubs of climate governance on the side of fragmenters, Major Economies Meetings/Forum on Energy and Climate (MEM/MEF) and now defunct Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate (APP) can be given as examples (Rowan, 2019). The APP and the MEF were established in 2005 and in 2007, respectively, with the purpose of developing an alternative venue where the large economies were able to prioritize their national development programs and put in place the discourses on climate change, energy security and so forth. Initiated by Australia and the US, the APP was “an effort to destabilize the Kyoto Protocol before it established a tradition as the main international institution on climate change” (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen and McGee, 2013, p. 64). It was introduced in less than a year after the KP entered into force. Likewise, the MEM was established by the Bush administration “to provide an alternative negotiating forum outside the UNFCCC” (p. 64). Within these forums, the Parties advocated for a governance mode of voluntarism in dealing with climate change. Interestingly, despite the ‘small club’ character of the organizations, the APP and the MEM both attracted the major emitters of the developing world such as China and India, both strict advocates of the discourse of historical responsibilities of the developed countries in the UNFCCC negotiations. It can be argued that these countries also sought to obtain as much as possible from such high-level forums (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen and McGee, 2013, p. 71) by engaging with counter-institutionalization. Moreover, existing multilateral forums such as the Group of Eight (G8) and the Group of Twenty (G20) began to focus on climate change. Altogether, the highest polluting countries were gathered in many informal coalitions. Beginning from 2005, the

G8 Plus Five operated “a strategy to separate the rising powers from the G77 and China to bring down the Kyoto ‘firewall’ and to develop a new regime based on a bottom-up, ‘pledge and review’ approach” (Kirton and Kokotsis, 2015, p. 8).

The developed countries either made ineffective efforts to meet the emission reduction targets of the KP or failed to make such efforts (Nasiritousi and Bäckstrand, 2019, p. 29). Some, namely Canada, US, Russia, Japan and New Zealand (most are members of the APP and the MEF) declined to sign up for the second commitment period of the KP. Moreover, despite the emission reductions achieved to some extent (mainly resulting from economic stalemate in the post-Soviet transition countries), global emissions rose by 31% between 1990 and 2010 (Nasiritousi and Bäckstrand, 2019, p. 30). This was due to the economic growth rates of the rising powers of the developing world.

On the other hand, the deepener countries of global climate governance began their counter-institutionalization through other transnational institutions working for ambitious climate action. The countries more vulnerable to climate change allied with some developed countries (especially from the European Union), as well as subnational and private institutions, founded or participated in alternative institutions, due to dissatisfaction with the slow pace of climate action within the formal climate regime.

Counter-institutionalization yielded its first results in COP13 in 2007. Actually, just after the KP entered into force, negotiations for a new treaty started (Rowan, 2019). After two years of negotiations, it was decided by the Bali Action Plan of COP13 that the developing countries should submit until 2009 their NAMAs (Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions) which were not legally binding, and that developed countries should be committed to meet quantified emission reduction targets. It was historic for the recalcitrant states such as US and China to converge on a common trajectory at last. It is also suggested that the Bali Roadmap can be evaluated as one of the foundations paving the way for the Paris Agreement (Cerit Mazlum, 2019).

COP15 held in Copenhagen in 2009 was expected to produce a new climate treaty, as the shortcomings of the KP had already become evident (Nasiritousi and Bäckstrand, 2019, p. 30). The discontent of the nation-states over legally binding obligations of the KP resulted in a gridlock in COP15. There, many states pushed for an impasse so as to avoid having to scale up their climate actions. Forum shopping carried out within other institutions by the fragmenters proved an efficient strategic action (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen and McGee, 2013, p. 73; Zürn and Faude, 2013, p. 125). Copenhagen Conference also witnessed a struggle on the part of the civil society organizations, which organized mass demonstrations and marches in the city. Nearly 100,000 people protested the climate negotiations’ exclusionary practices (Kuyper, Linnér and Schroeder, 2018, p. 3). At the very end of the conference, a small group of states led by the US drafted the Copenhagen Accord “as a last minute response to the UN’s failure” (Kirton and Kokotsis, 2015, p. 231), which was not accepted by the Parties on a consensus. However, it adopted the idea of countries’ voluntary reductions, which later paved the way for the pledge and review system

materialized in the Paris Agreement (van Asselt et al., 2018, p. 29-30). On the other hand, it should be noted that Copenhagen Accord did not consist of any role reserved for non-state actors despite their greater role in the global ecosystem of climate governance (Held and Roger, 2018, p. 532).

At COP16 held in Cancún in 2010, reporting and review processes for climate actions were substantialized for the first time. Yet, they were constrained by the divergence of developed and developing nations once again. It was agreed that developed countries would write biennial reports which would be subject to “international assessment and review” consisting of a technical expert review and “multilateral assessment” (van Asselt et al., 2018, p. 38). For their part, the developing countries would submit biennial update reports which would be subject to international consultation and analysis, which was agreed to be “non-confrontational and non-intrusive and respectful of national sovereignty” (p. 38).

Countries came to a more evident turnout before 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol’s first commitment period was ending. While the developed countries increased their demands for applying the emission reduction targets for the rising economies, such as China and India, the developing countries insisted on their earlier position, holding on to the developed/developing country binary (van Asselt, 2018, p. 29). Thus, the third period starts with the Durban Conference (COP17) in 2011, when the Paris Agreement negotiations process also began. Later, the Parties submitted their pledges of emission reductions, namely Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2015. However, it turned out that the overall commitments of countries were not sufficiently ambitious to keep the global temperature rise below 2°C (Raftery et al. 2017).

At COP 21, the Paris Agreement was adopted by 195 countries in December 2015. In many circles, it is regarded as a successful agreement with the highest number of signatories. It entered into force on November 4, 2016 after 55 countries responsible for at least 55 % of the global carbon emissions ratified the treaty. While without stringent bindingness, its flexible structure, based on voluntary pledges of states for climate action, paved the way for higher participation. As there were many divergent and conflicting state interests about the climate action preventing common commitments earlier on, the Paris Agreement was intentionally crafted to be more flexible than the KP in order to lay the ground for achieving consensus in a much easier way (through voluntary pledges) (Cahill-Webb, 2018). With the Paris Agreement, global climate governance has seen a shift from “regulatory model” to “catalytic and facilitative” model (Hale, 2016).

Nevertheless, the Paris Agreement has “a weak legal status” in terms of effectiveness (Bäckstrand et al. 2017, p. 573). Unlike the Protocol that had emissions reductions obligations on countries, the Paris Agreement is not legally binding in terms of the voluntary pledges of states (NDCs). However, according to the Paris Agreement, the signatory states are obliged to prepare, communicate and maintain their successive NDCs (p. 573). Thus, an element of “top-down” governance in the post-Paris architecture is the procedural obligation to submit NDCs and “subject their implementation

to technical expert and peer review” at the international level (van Asselt et al., 2018, p. 31). The pledge and review structure allows for constant reviewing on the basis of five-year global stocktakes, and then submitting the renewed NDCs towards the global goal of 2°C degrees. The first global stocktake will be conducted in 2023 to evaluate the collective progress. Following this, it is intended that the Parties will be informed on how much they may ratchet up their NDCs for successive periods in a nationally determined manner (UNFCCC, 2016, Article 14). Regarding the framework for reporting and review, the Paris Agreement transformed it into a more flexible and equalizing form. It obligated all Parties with the enhanced transparency framework but presenting ‘built-in flexibility’ to account for the different capacities of the Parties (van Asselt et al., 2018, p. 39). Since the Parties have previously submitted their NDCs, they have to submit annual inventory reports as well as biennial progress reports to determine the action needed to reach and ratchet up their NDCs. Effective reporting is however still at stake, despite the elements of transparency framework. It is asserted that compared to the developed countries, developing countries are facing difficulties in reporting (p. 39). In the Katowice Conference (COP24) in 2018, it was decided that common reporting rules were applicable to all Parties. Moreover, there were heated debates in the last COP25 about how the Paris Agreement should be implemented as the Paris rulebook is still being negotiated. Specifically, the implementation rules for Article 6 will be negotiated at COP26, as agreement on these rules was not reached at COP25.

Furthermore, through the mode of hybrid multilateralism, the role of non-state actors increased. Consequentially, a new governance mode consisting of two different governance traits arose: (1) State-led action (NDCs) and (2) UNFCCC to orchestrate NDCs and transnational climate efforts. Firstly, in the current absence of legally binding commitments “much of the accountability and watchdog role of NDCs will fall to non-state actors both internationally and domestically.” (Bäckstrand et al., 2017, p. 571). In their role with respect to the NDCs, non-state actors will be “enhancing transparency, facilitating the stocktakes, and pressuring for the ratcheting up of NDCs every 5 years” (Kuyper et al., 2018, p. 2). Second governance trait, the mode of orchestration, functions through three elements: Orchestrator, Intermediary and Target group. Thus, the UNFCCC as an orchestrator will use various intermediaries such as transnational networks, or international cooperative initiatives that will inspire, encourage or push the target groups (i.e. countries, companies, municipalities, etc.) to take more ambitious climate actions (Hickmann, Widerberg, Lederer and Pattberg, 2019). Thus, the Paris Agreement has “consolidated the UNFCCC as the central orchestrator of non-state actors and transnational initiatives in global climate governance” (Bäckstrand and Kuyper, 2017, p. 765).

Overall, this part argued that the Paris Agreement is the act of re-legitimation or institutional adaptation to the delegitimations by two counter-institutionalizations. If it can be argued that the counter-institutionalization of fragmenters were justified when the voluntary (non-binding) national climate actions were adopted by the Paris Agreement, the counter-institutionalization of deepeners also succeeded to a certain extent, albeit more controversially. The latter’s achievements by the Paris Agreement might be exemplified with the mode of orchestration of the UNFCCC, increased role for non-state actors (see the following subsection) and the ratchet-up mechanism

through global stocktakes in the new climate governance system. With the Paris Agreement, the UNFCCC aspired to move a fragmented global governance towards a less fragmented, more coordinated system. Yet, there are doubts over the effectiveness of this new governance mode in achieving the objective of 2 degrees.

### **3. 1. Non-State Actors in Limbo: Contesting by Counter-Institutionalization or Politicization?**

Although Zürn identifies two major contestations to the international institutions, namely counter-institutionalization by states and politicization by non-state/societal actors, this paper suggests that classifying the contestations by non-state actors as politicization is misleading, and obscures the links between its dynamic relations with counter-institutionalization. Non-state actors include businesses, companies, investors, cities, regions, civil society organizations/NGOs and epistemic communities. Especially due to the presence of public-private partnerships or international cooperative initiatives within the umbrella of non-state actors, such a classification is not explanatory. There are many non-UNFCCC climate initiatives where states are members alongside companies, civil society organizations, and transnational networks of cities. Yet again, states' decision to create or sign up for these initiatives can be evaluated as strategic action that functions as counter-institutionalization, which then leads to the re-legitimation of global climate governance in the post-Paris period. In other words, the Paris Agreement has responded to the proliferation of cooperation between states as members or partners and other transnational actors (counter-institutionalization) under the title of non-state actors by bringing new roles for non-state actors in its hybrid multilateralism.

Climate actions of non-state actors first began to be woven into the UNFCCC policy outreach in 2011 in order to raise global ambition levels for climate action. The UNFCCC sought to do so for three reasons: firstly, the gridlock in Copenhagen required new approaches in multilateral climate regime; secondly, subnational and non-state actors could not wait any more “for guidance from national governments”, and thirdly, the UNFCCC Secretariat was keen to work with other actors rather than sticking to the Parties in order to create a positive vibe for global climate action (Hickmann et al., 2019, p. 12).

The UNFCCC began to work more closely with subnational and non-state actors. Three initiatives are significant to mention in this regard: The Momentum for Change Initiative, Lima Paris Action Agenda (LPAA) and Non-State Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) (Hickmann et al., 2019). The UNFCCC took various private funds to realize the Momentum for Change Initiative in 2011 in order to make itself a lively forum for the participation of subnational and non-state actors. Then it launched LPAA during the COP in Lima in 2014. The hosting government of Peru and the UNFCCC secretariat launched the NAZCA platform, which takes the registers of the commitments by non-state actors. NAZCA has been transformed into a portal, “Global Climate Action”, that displays climate actions of both state and non-state actors on the world map. As of June 2020, over 18 thousand actors have almost 27 thousand climate actions (Climate

Action). This strategy aimed to make the national governments to sign a more ambitious climate agreement by showing them the numbers and actors of climate actions undertaken by subnational and non-state actors; in other words, ensuring them that their national climate policies would be supported by the people (Widerberg, 2017).

The number of UNFCCC-accredited non-state actors was 163 in 1995, became 2133 in 2017 (Nasiritousi and Bäckstrand, 2019, p. 26). During the Paris conference (COP21), almost eight thousand non-state observers were registered (Hofferberth and Lambach, 2018, p. 31). A close look at the discussions during the climate negotiations will suffice to reveal that the non-state actors independently undertake a number of endeavors such as “emission trading systems, carbon markets, company-to-company standard setting, greenhouse gas accounting and disclosure and project implementation” (van Asselt et al., 2018, p. 30).

Seen increasingly as actors of “scaling up ambition” for climate action, non-state actors have been in the spotlight of intergovernmental discussions of the UNFCCC since 2011 (van Asselt et al., 2018, p. 30-31). It is asserted that non-state actors may “help states gain the technology, expertise and confidence to formulate and implement more ambitious contributions, and to build interest group support to pursue them” (Chan, van Asselt, Hale, Abbot, Beisheim, Hoffmann and Widerberg, 2015, p. 2). The role and actions of non-state actors have been given increasing importance with an optimism that hails the presence of non-state actors in climate governance as leading to “replicable, apolitical, win-win solutions” (Chan, Boran, van Asselt, Iacobuta, Niles and Rietig, 2019, p. 5). However, some non-state actors, such as businesses, adopt conflicting stances and practices, ranging from greenwashing to advocating low-carbon economy (Nasiritousi, 2017). It should be noted that every non-state actor has taken climate action for a different reason (ranging from private interests to public good) and there is no coordination among them (Chan et al., 2015).

#### **4. Transnational Politicization for Deepening of Climate Governance**

Zürn defines politicization as showing resistance or support for an issue about global governance in various forms of debate, protest, publicization, media coverage, and or problematization (2004, 2010, 2013, 2018a, 2018b). Societal actors (individuals, networks, NGOs, etc.) might undertake those activities at either local, regional, national or transnational levels. Jacobs (2016) contends that the Paris Agreement was accepted by the governments after five years of pressure from “a broad coalition of forces from global civil society”. Although this is partially true in the context where the COP15 (2009) failed to generate a new, long-awaited climate treaty in Copenhagen, it is important to acknowledge the existence of a climate movement that began to politicize global climate governance long before Copenhagen.

For two decades or so, global warming was only one of the issue areas on the agenda of environmental movement, as there was not a separate climate advocacy per se. The climate change movement, consisting of many actors, differentiated in terms of policy orientation,



organizational structure and type of mobilization, emerged in the 2000s. Two of these actors are remarkable. One of the oldest climate network is Climate Action Network (CAN), established as early as 1989, and attended world climate conferences since its early years (Dietz and Garrelts, 2014). CAN advocated for low-carbon transition and technological solutions by following a professional structure in their organization (Dietz and Garrelts, 2014). They publish reports, engage lobbying and advocate climate action in the UN's climate meetings. CAN was criticized as being reformist in the climate movement, most strongly by another important climate movement, Climate Justice Now! (CJN!). Gathered under the CJN!, networks all over the world advocated for deeper climate action, taking the notion of climate justice as their common cause and preferring not only expert-based activism but also street demonstrations, etc. (Hadden, 2015) The CJN! aimed to include in its agenda cross-national injustices ranging from economic development, North-South divide, ethnicity, gender and discrimination against indigenous communities. These two transnational networks were strong in mobilizing societal politicization during the Copenhagen conference, which provided the climate activists with an "important opportunity for networking and mobilization with potentially enduring consequences for the development of a transnational climate movement" (Wahlström et al. 2013, p. 3). Among the participants of the protests during COP15, the majority were those who framed the climate issue as a matter of global justice (Wahlström et al., 2013). Hence, the climate justice movement emerged after Copenhagen (Fisher, 2010). This was a turning point for the NGOs as they changed their campaign tactics in the following period.

In the run-up to the Paris Agreement, it can be claimed that the formerly antagonistic groups such as the business community and the environmental NGOs, were brought together for a global aim. Thus, Jacobs (2016) asserts that the four groups of actors contributed to the pressure on the governments signing the Paris Agreement: the scientific community, the economic community, the businesses, and the NGOs (Jacobs, 2016, p. 314). Firstly, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was influential. It is actually scientists who have politicized global warming since the 1970s, but thanks to the impact of environmental movements around the world their voices were heard. Thus four years before the emergence of an international climate politics, the IPCC was founded (Dietz and Garrelts, 2014). Again, the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report published in 2007 demonstrated unequivocally that climate was changing at a catastrophic degree. Their Fifth Assessment Report in 2014 revealed that the global temperature increase should be kept at maximum of 1.5°C degrees, a target in line with emitted greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. They introduced the concept of "carbon budget", and advocated the policies that would bring net zero emissions.

Secondly, the economic community presented various studies such as the UK government's Stern Report in 2006 that advocates that the costs of preventing climate change are cheaper than the costs of dealing with the future consequences of climate change. Due to the world financial crisis of 2007-2008, climate action was downgraded in the political agenda of financial authorities (Jacobs, 2016). An NGO called Carbon Tracker published the situation of global fossil fuel reserves online, arguing that the latter would not be cost competitive in the near future with the



decreasing prices of renewable energy. That would then lead to the financial investments in fossil fuel to turn into stranded assets, leading to the “carbon bubble”. In 2014, the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate published a report titled “Better Climate, Better Growth” that argued that the reduction of emissions would ensure better conditions of an economic growth with healthier communities, less air pollution, and greater energy security (Jacobs, 2016).

Thirdly, the business community or the capitalist class is both the cause of the climate change problem and part of the solution (Beeson 2019, p. 49). Business circles increasingly agreed to the notion of green growth in the global markets. There was also the call of over 1,000 global companies to the governments to introduce carbon pricing. The business community mobilized thousands of companies under the coalition of “We Mean Business”. There were three major components of this shift in communication that was initiated before Paris: “low carbon transition is already underway; it presents unprecedented economic opportunities; its successful implementation rests on the cooperation of actors from all sections of society”. (Aykut, Morena et al. 2020, p. 12). Thus, such positive messages were important in bringing out both the outcome (the Paris Agreement) and its implementation by Parties (Aykut et al. 2020, p. 13).

Last but not the least, it is highly important to acknowledge the role of NGOs in challenging global climate governance. Activists used the Copenhagen narrative in the run up to and during the negotiations of the Paris conference. The climate justice frame advocated by alliance between vulnerable countries and NGOs was valuable in securing strong bargaining so that the notion of loss and damage was adopted in the Agreement (Allan and Hadden, 2017). Furthermore, a “broad coalition of groups” in global climate movement prioritized their campaigns on the issue of coal (Jacobs, 2016). They launched worldwide campaigns to halt and prevent coal-fired power plants, and succeeded in stopping the plans of many plants and diverting investors away from fossil fuel investments in the US and Europe. Furthermore, as the workers employed in the coal sector will be unemployed in a transition period to low-carbon economy, the discussions about ‘fair transition’ started to emerge on the part of global labor movement in general, and in the International Trade Union Confederation in particular. In the US, there was a huge protest against the building of Keystone XL Pipeline planned to connect the oil produced in the tar sands of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, passing through the US. While 350.org launched a successful campaign against it, Barack Obama, former US president, also announced that the pipeline was not in line with the nation’s climate policies. Moreover, 350.org mobilized student groups and universities, and called on the major universities in the US to withdraw their investments from coal industry.

Furthermore, prior to the Paris Conference, an online petition posted through Avaaz reached 42 million supporters worldwide. In the New York Climate Summit of 23 September 2014, nearly 400,000 marched against coal production. In December, the French government declared a state of emergency and banned civil society demonstrations during the COP21 in Paris under the pretext of the terrorist attacks two weeks previously. Despite the governmental ban, a number of

protests were held by different groups of climate activists in various zones of Paris (Wahlström and de Moor, 2017).

The politicization of transnational societal actors compelling national governments and international institutions to take ambitious climate action contributed to the acceptance of the Paris Agreement and the emergent watchdog role of non-state actors therein. While the pledge and review dimension of the post-Paris architecture owes to the counter-institutionalization of the “fragmenter” states formalized in the Copenhagen Accord, the increased mission of the non-state actors for the accountability of states, which is an important aspect among other changes introduced with the Paris Agreement, was a proof that the politicization by societal actors worked out well. Nevertheless, global climate governance is challenged by its own issue; that is, climate change requires more ambitious and decisive action that should bring radical transformation. Moreover, its legitimacy is still at stake despite its re-legitimation with the Paris Agreement. The following section will point out some of the legitimation problems of post-Paris global climate governance. Then, it will scrutinize the place of non-state actors within the new governance mode and discuss which additional legitimation problems were brought to the fore.

### **5. Legitimacy Deficits of Global Climate Governance in Terms of Non-State Actors**

Due to the power bias of global governance in general, the structural deficiency with regard to legitimacy cannot easily be overcome. This deficiency of global climate governance causes some “deepeners” to be affected by climate change in a much more serious way. The future of vulnerable countries with climate risks lies in the hands of the powerful states, yet the significant number of the latter continues to avoid ambitious mitigation of emissions. That said, as the legitimation issue facing non-state actors remains more complicated, this last section will point out those legitimacy deficits related to non-state actors. An exception is to be made on the discussion about justice where the intergovernmental debate is exposed to some extent.

Legitimacy can be generally described as justification of authority (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen and McGee, 2013). In this part, normative legitimacy of global climate governance will be evaluated mainly through the components of process-based input legitimacy and output legitimacy such as participation, representation, accountability, transparency and justice (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen and McGee, 2013; Kuyper et al. 2018). As regards input legitimacy, one can examine the participation and representation of non-state actors in global climate governance negotiations. The involvement of civil society functions to increase the “popular legitimacy”, i.e. the public support given to the global climate governance (Bernauer and Gampfer, 2013). However, as is said, civil society participation has been limited for the purpose of increasing efficiency of the bargaining process in the negotiations. After the Copenhagen Conference, when the climate negotiations came to a political gridlock along with huge NGO protests, the UNFCCC brought certain limitations to the NGOs. Most important of all, the members of NGOs have to apply for registration months before a conference. To that end, the UNFCCC Secretariat implements institutional control and

then only permits each NGO a small number of the observers (Orr, 2016). The “observer” NGOs can join in the negotiation rooms also through the delegations of countries. However, in that case, their contesting potential to the national authorities is severely undermined (Kuyper et al. 2018, p. 10). In COP25 in Madrid, arguably influenced by the emergent Fridays for Future (FFF) movement, the Nordic delegation brought several youth representatives to the conference. Yet, other than inviting a small number of young activists to speak at events, such as Greta Thunberg, the founder of the FFF that mobilized millions of people around the world in the last two years, together with another new climate organization called Extinction Rebellion (XR), young climate activists officially prohibited from entering the halls. After activists began protesting by chanting for climate justice during the conference, they were dismissed from COP25 halls by security guards. On the other hand, however, the climate negotiations continued to take the global polluter companies as its sponsors, encouraging “greenwashing” (Atkin, 2019). The representation of non-state actors is even more problematic. In order to be allowed into the halls and rooms, the NGOs must be accredited representatives. Accordingly, it is an issue who decides on which activists would be accredited. Therefore, the input legitimacy of the COP25 remains deficient, as was the case for the previous COPs.

Other intertwined elements of process-based legitimacy are accountability and transparency. Governance mode shifting from monocentrism to polycentrism in the post-Paris governance architecture raises the questions of “who will be accountable to whom?” and “what will be the hierarchies of accountability?” (Widerberg and Pattberg, 2017). Article 15 of the Paris Agreement involves a “mechanism to facilitate implementation of and promote compliance of the Agreement”. Compliance in that regard should be expert-based and it lacks punitive measures (Bäckstrand et al. 2017, p. 571). The Agreement also brings in a five-year global stocktake element which does “look at state contributions on an aggregate level”. In so doing, the Agreement does not leave room for the states’ contestations of accountability. The major informal instrument of pressure for compliance to NDCs is ‘naming and shaming’, which is mostly carried out by the civil society sector from non-state actors. However, the role of civil society in revealing the status of countries in relation to their climate commitments is very much dependent on transparent reports and efficient reviewing. Climate Action Tracker and Civil Society Review are leading examples for the tools of monitoring and pressing countries for compliance (Nasiritousi and Bäckstrand, 2019, p. 33).

Although transparency is cited as the most effective trait of the Paris Agreement (Bäckstrand et al., 2017; Cahill-Web, 2018), there are studies pointing out various problems of transparency, monitoring and reporting. Especially when data is not always quantifiable, or overlaps with another data and leads to double counting, the issue of accountability arises because sanctions cannot be applied thoroughly (Widerberg and Pattberg, 2017). Gupta and Mason (2016) challenge the overestimated discourse of transparency, which was celebrated by state-led and private climate governance “as a way to monitor and/or reward various actors’ climate mitigation actions and performance” (p. 2). In their analysis where they examine three flexibility mechanisms, the first two being formal mechanisms within the regime – Clean Development

Mechanism (CDM), Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), and Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) – they observe that although there are four rationales driving (or influencing) the politics of transparency, namely, democratization, marketization, technocratization and privatization, only the latter two are presently considered. The authors conclude that the potentials for public-good of transparency regulations and procedures are not operated as such. Rather, these mechanisms often respond to the private-good of multi-stakeholders that promote and carry out transparency for the purpose of their private interests, such as the evolution of carbon markets. For example, the data on climate risks is collected for investment companies rather than for the people who will be affected by those risks (p.19).

These studies prove that transparency in its own right is not a single parameter of evaluation in a governance architecture. “What is transparent for what and whom” is a more relevant question, which should raise additional questions about legitimacy and justice. Nor do the increased role and interference of non-state actors suffice to legitimate global climate governance. Besides, non-state actors cannot be classified as a homogenous unified front, since not all of the stakeholders categorized as non-state actors pursue similar goals. It is important to ask who is empowered through these formal processes. Currently, the UN-led climate governance lacks mechanisms to empower NGOs’ monitoring capacities that will investigate the accountability of the actors. The less the civil society takes participation and monitoring, the more the states’ parochial interests together with private actors’ interests can be taken care of. As mentioned, the UNFCCC has become the orchestrator, facilitator and coordinator of non-state climate action in the post-Paris governance architecture. But in case of “weak accountability and transparency mechanisms and inadequate coordination”, post-Paris climate actions will be inefficient (Nasiritousi and Bäckstrand, 2019, p. 42).

Justice is another important element of normative legitimacy, and it begs the questions of “who gets what, when and how?” Even though “climate justice” is oftentimes mentioned in the negotiations of the Paris Agreement, it is “not elaborated in its substantive provisions” (Kuyper et al. 2017, p. 8). It was only cited once, in the introductory passage in the Agreement. Justice has three subcomponents: agency, access and allocation (Kuyper et al. 2018). Agency is about “who makes decisions on behalf of whom” (Kuyper et al. 2018, p. 8). There are procedural injustices over inadequate representation of the views of the adversely affected, for example the indigenous communities of the Amazon, or the inhabitants of the low island countries whose land will soon be under water due to global warming. As stipulated by the COP21 decision, International Indigenous Peoples’ Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) was established. Later in COP23 in 2017, an open multi-stakeholder dialogue to develop the platform for local communities and indigenous peoples was convened. Though promising, these developments still remain shallow. There is also the issue of intergenerational justice that the FFF problematizes. A related pillar of justice is linked with the issue of access to benefits and rights. Similar to other UNFCCC decision, the Paris Agreement is mainly “driven by technocratic and market oriented rationales”, and thus hardly represent equity issues (p. 8). Accordingly, civil society participation is encouraged to remedy this deficit.

Finally, the issue of justice goes hand in hand with the issue of allocation of “climate-related responsibilities and financial compensations”. The issue of allocation was quite different in the KP because there were Annex I and Annex II countries with their CBDR. However, NDCs after Paris were based on countries’ voluntary pledges. Furthermore, after Copenhagen, the notion of climate justice became more common (Hadden, 2015). This led to equity concerns’ being discussed more frequently in climate negotiations, which paved the way for the notion of loss and damage to be established in the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) in 2014, and then integrated into the Paris regime. The Paris Agreement was the first international climate treaty that addresses this concept, but it does not materialize it into strong provisions (Pekkarinen, Toussaint and van Asselt, 2019, p. 34). Nevertheless, the notion is readily applied in customary international law, as in the claim for compensation for loss and damage that a party is responsible for (Streck, von Unger and Greiner, 2020, p. 144). Moreover, it is directly concerned with finance (p. 145). Kuyper et al. (2018, p. 8) asserts that post-Paris climate governance will reproduce the “harm done and human rights violations of local communities” if the real reasons behind the continuing inequality are not addressed.

## **6. Conclusion**

It is widely accepted that post-Paris climate governance has problems of effectiveness and compliance. Nevertheless, the global community in general, and NGOs in particular have no option but to press for more ambitious actions from all stakeholders to stop climate breakdown. In the post-Paris climate governance architecture, since its main pillar was the voluntary and non-binding NDCs of countries, the transparency framework became immensely critical because it provides the only tool to assess compliance. In it, formal ways of advocacy (monitoring and disclosure) is the key to name and shame the actors in question through national and transnational networks. In order to expose the laggard countries, reporting of the mitigation actions by the Parties became crucial for the global civil society. However, some states seek less intrusive rules for the implementation of transparency framework.

This study demonstrated that the Paris Agreement has been gradually adapted institutionally to the already existing fragmentation of climate governance since the 2000s. The new governance mode adopted by the Paris Agreement has resulted from the combining factors of pressures from states’ counter-institutionalization, which was evident in UN-led conference gridlocks as well as the establishment of alternative forums alongside the UNFCCC, and the politicization of non-state actors under a broad coalition. In the light of the ongoing negotiations about certain important issues with regard to the implementation of the Paris Agreement such as international cooperation mechanisms, however, it can be argued that it is still in transition even after the Paris Agreement (Aykut, d’Amico et al. 2020). This shift is “not a completed event, but an ongoing, conflicted and open-ended process” (p. 2). Therefore, the Paris Agreement should not be seen as the last stop in climate governance, but should be understood as only one of the stops in the

course of climate governance. With its enduring legitimacy deficits elaborated above, it seems that global climate governance will have to re-legitimize itself in the face of future challenges.

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## The European Union’s Approach to “Women, Peace and Security”: Discourses, Representations and Constructions

Avrupa Birliği’nin “Kadınlar, Barış ve Güvenlik” Gündemine Yönelik  
Yaklaşımı: Söylemler, Temsiller ve Oluşumlar

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### Abstract

“Women, Peace and Security” (WPS) Agenda has been introduced by the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and advocated by its follow-up resolutions. It has four main objectives: “prevention and conflict resolution; protection of women and girls from gender-based violence; participation of women in all stages of decision-making in conflict resolution; and relief and recovery.” The European Union has also developed a perspective on the relationship between gender and security since the mid-2000s in line with the UNSC resolutions on WPS. This study argues that the EU’s approach towards the WPS Agenda is constructed through discourses of the patriarchal global system and representations of women as “victims”, “those to be protected”, and “agency” promoting peace. The study utilises feminist and post-structural views and provides an analysis of the EU’s discourses on WPS.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality, European Union, Security

### Öz

“Kadınlar, Barış ve Güvenlik” (KBG) Gündemi ilk olarak Birleşmiş Milletler Güvenlik Konseyi’nin 1325 (2000) sayılı kararıyla oluşturulmuş ve onu takip eden başka kararlarla da desteklenmiştir. Gündemin dört temel amacı bulunmaktadır: “önleme ve çatışma çözümü; kadınların ve kız çocuklarının toplumsal cinsiyet temelli şiddetten korunması; kadınların çatışma çözümündeki tüm süreçlere karar-alma aşamalarındaki katılımı; rahatlama ve iyileşme.” Avrupa Birliği de, KGB ile ilgili alınan BM kararlarına uygun olarak 2000’li yılların ortalarından itibaren toplumsal cinsiyet ve güvenlik arasındaki ilişkiye yönelik bir perspektif geliştirmektedir. Bu çalışma, AB’nin KBG Gündemi’ne yönelik perspektifinin, küresel ve ataerkil sistemin söylemleri ve kadınları “kurban”, “korunmayı bekleyen” ve barışı destekleyen “aktörler” olarak nitelendiren temsilleri yoluyla oluşturulduğunu ileri sürmektedir. Çalışma feminist ve post-yapısalcı yaklaşımlara dayanarak AB’nin KBG’ye yönelik söylemlerini analiz etmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliği, Avrupa Birliği, Güvenlik

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## 1. Introduction

Studies on the relationship between gender and security have gained increasing attention in the field of International Relations mostly over the past 30 years (Kennedy and Dingli, 2016, pp. 154-155). In particular, many of them mainly focus on a wide range of issues including the place and role of women in security with regard to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on "Women, Peace and Security" (WPS). The WPS as an agenda has an overall purpose of "prevention and resolution of conflicts; participation of women in all stages of decision-making in conflict resolution; protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, relief and recovery." The European Union has also developed an approach to WPS Agenda since the mid-2000s. In the security sphere of the EU polity through the WPS Agenda, the concept of "gender equality" has considerably been reinforced by the notion of "mainstreaming gender". In February 2005 in Luxembourg, the Ministers of the EU on Gender Equality confirmed that they would launch required initiatives, programmes and policies to implement the UNSCR 1325. The EU's Comprehensive Approach to WPS is one of the earliest documents that was published regarding the WPS Agenda in 2008. The EU has then proceeded the framework on WPS with the announcement of the Strategic Approach in November 2018. In particular, when compared to the previous official documents, the EU's strategy refers to a role of the EU in advancing a gender approach in the global security system. However, this study argues that the EU's discursive engagement in WPS has noticeably been grounded on the representations of women as both "victim" and "agency" in security environment and still has implications of "patriarchal ideology" as Lazar (2007) argues. The EU's gender perspective still embraces a language of "protectionist" view, and it also regards women as "agency" that can still be found in its textual discourse of gendered structures of security (Otto, 2018). Therefore, it further assures the reproduction of the current representations of women and constructions of the relationship between gender and security. In this framework, the study aims to provide a textual analysis approach employing Lazar's views on Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, and post-structural approaches referring to Foucault's accounts on discourse and power; and a number of prominent feminist scholars including, Cameron, Butler, Tickner, Enloe, Khalid, Cockburn and Shepherd.

Section I consists of two interrelated parts. It starts with a theoretical explanation of the relationship between gender and power; and between women and security through a discursive approach and a feminist view. It also examines a number of UNSC resolutions on WPS from an analytical standpoint. The feminist challenge, here, points to the main social constructions of gender relations, hierarchies, militarism, and patriarchal structures which are embedded in the international security system. Section II depicts the EU's approach to WPS through an analysis of the EU's official documents such as the Comprehensive Approach to Strategic Approach towards the "Women, Peace and Security", the EU's Strategy towards WPS and the EU's "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". Therefore, the second section scrutinises the EU's discourses that are mainly based on a protectionist view and an approach regarding "women as agent".

## 2. Gender, Discourse and the UNSCRs on the “Women, Peace and Security” Agenda

This section offers a theoretical and analytical perspective for understanding the relationship between gender and security referring to the concepts of power, ideology, and patriarchy. It attempts to portray the discursive constructions of gender relations with regard to Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), and post-structuralist arguments (Lazar, 2007, pp. 141-143). Therefore, the section initially places a great emphasis on the relationship among gender, power/ideology and discourse. Admittedly, as an assumption, the primary goal in feminist theory is to contribute to the achievement of an overall transformation of the relationship between gender and power, and unequal and unjust social practices and structures. However, this view also intentionally and critically reveals how social practices and institutions are gendered and become a part of patriarchal ideology that is constructed through discourses and representations of women (Lazar, 2007, p.152). Therefore, this section provides us with a theoretical explanation of the relationship between social practices and discourses and the levels of analyses of language used in text. The second part similarly portrays how discourses are produced through the UN security mechanism based on the UNSC resolutions.

### 2.1. A Feminist Critique

The study departs from an argument that language is ontologically important as it constructs gender. From this perspective, feminism attempts to account how the relationship between women and men is established, and thus how it is transformed through discourses and practices (Cameron, 1992). It also help us depict the discursive construction of the relationship between “gender and power” and correspondingly “women and security”.

According to Foucault, discourse is, in its formation, “constituted by a group of sequences of signs, in so far they are statements, that is, in so far, as they can be assigned particular modalities of existence”. The statements – that are neither hidden nor totally visible – can be derived from the signifying elements that are traced or pronounced in texts (Foucault, 2002, pp. 121-122). Discourses in texts and speeches aptly display structures and practices. In his view of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Fairclough (1989) makes an argument on the performance of discourses by mingling the role of language and power and then linking this relationship to ideologies and social practices. He also argues that “discourses function as rhetorical purposes in particular in neoliberal narratives of globalisation as imaginaries” (Fairclough, 2005, p.56). In other words, social practices and structures as a part of ideology are essentially discursive. Discourse, in general, “constitutes and is constituted by” social structures and institutions (Lazar, 2007, pp. 149-150). In Derrida’s deconstruction of discourses – as a practice of reading – the “metaphysics of presence” also signifies a space made up of a unified structure of concepts, ideas, language, signs, and discourses. It too includes the relations between men and women (Hansen, 2006, p.17).<sup>1</sup>

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1 Derrida uses deconstruction as a process more than a theoretical approach aiming at analysing the texts to reach to “ground of meaningful and nonmeaningful, reason and unreason in terms of an original presence...”. This would be a deconstruction of “unconditional rationalism” (Kurana, 2016, p.84).

The international security system and its militaristic components denoting patriarchy essentially form the liberal ideology. Patriarchy as "an ideological system also has interactions with other ideologies" and embraces asymmetrical and hierarchical power relations in discourse (Lazar, 2007, p. 142). Patriarchal ideology, in this sense, privileges men over women and is discursively (and textually) signified in texts. The representations of gender and women in ideologically, patriarchally and militarily designated global security structures are aptly composed of discourses. Foucault's thoughts on power-based neo-liberal system principally also represent the gender dynamics of security discourses. In Foucauldian sense, "orders of discourse" roughly defines procedures and systems of "inclusions and exclusions". The system specifies "insiders" and "outsiders" of particular identities and subjectivities including gender, ethnicity, religion, social class, etc. (Foucault, 1981; Howarth and Stavrakakis, 2000, pp. 3-4; Hansen, 2006, pp. 15-17). In addition, these various identities are interrelated with each other. Thus, gender intersects other social identities categorised with respect to sexuality, ethnicity, social class, etc. (Lazar, 2005, p.1).

In his renowned study in "Language and Power", Fairclough argues that the relationship between discourse and social structures can also be valued in terms of "representations, relationships and identities." In particular, security and gender-related issues together manifest themselves in the representations of identity which are discursively constructed (Campbell, 1992, p. 204). Butler (1999, p. 4) asserts that within the political, ideological and social domain women are discursively "either misrepresented or not represented at all" (Fairclough, 1989). For Tickner, women are largely represented through a series of "myths of protection" (Tickner, 2001, p. 51). For example, "masculinised men" who are also militarised are mostly seen as "rational strategists and protector" while women are identified as "emotional and protected" (Enloe, 2004, p. 154). Furthermore, women are also viewed as "less appropriate" in the matters of foreign and security policy where "power, strength, rationality are attributed to men and masculinity" (Tickner, 1992, p. 3). Women are always objectified with certain roles and tasks that would suitably be exercised in gendered security structures. Therefore, the approach to the role of women in war is seen as a product of "hegemonic masculinity" (Tickner, 2001).<sup>2</sup> From this perspective, discursive construction of gender evidently constitutes the levels of production and reproduction of identities and subjectivities, and entirely displays the arranging security patterns of the political and international system (Hansen, 2006, pp. 15-17).

## 2.2. Security Discourse and the UNSCRs on WPS Agenda

Security discourse is originated in the security domain according to Foucault's notion. Security, as a form of power<sup>3</sup> generates its mechanism that is based on different levels of techniques and apparatus. Legislative measures, regulations, decrees, different types of preventive, punitive

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2 "Hegemonic masculinity" represents the dominant position of masculinity within the international system. This type constructs the masculine hegemonic order. Hegemony can also be understood from Gramscian logic signifying an order that has penetrated into the all aspects of political, social and economic life. See Tickner (2001; 1992).

3 For Foucault (2007), power is not grounded on itself; rather "it has mechanisms and procedures including hierarchial subordinations."

and protective measures totally set up a security mechanism (Foucault, 2007, pp. 1-27). The environment in which these security mechanisms are embedded is therefore seen as a reflection of the neo-liberal system and liberal ideology comprising politics, economy, social aspects of the global system as a whole. For Hudson (2010, pp. 3-8), the UNSC resolutions are the best place to start an analysis of gender discourse as the UN is constantly identified as the centre of the collective security system. More exactly, all the member states of the UN and regional entities such as the EU and NATO are committed to act in line with the principles of the UN.<sup>4</sup> This section also shows that a liberal conception of security which reinforces the gendered constructions of a hierarchically designed global system clashes with the emancipatory goal of the critical thinking. For the latter approach, within the existing structures, representations of women can rather be viewed as the mirror of political representations of power and ideology (Hansen, 2006, p. 6).

To comprehend the UN security mechanism, primarily, it would be appropriate to set out the most relevant UNSC Resolutions. This is because the UNSC produces the most apparent outcomes of the rhetoric of “the maintenance of peace and security”. The language of the resolutions, in general, proves the liberal system’s logic on “gender mainstreaming”. In particular, since its creation, the UNSCR 1325 has been regarded as a breakthrough in the UN history for the reason that “gender mainstreaming”<sup>5</sup> has officially and manifestly entered into the UN’s security discourses and practices. More concretely, by the UNSCR 1325, the UN has, in this manner, reaffirmed “the role of women in the prevention, protection, participation and relief and recovery” in all “efforts of the maintenance of peace and security” (George and Shepherd, 2016, p. 298). The UNSCR 1325 was then followed up by a number of resolutions, namely, 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015) 2272 (2016), 2331 (2016), 2467 (2019) and 2490 (2019).

The UNSCR 1820 (2008), which was adopted 8 years after the approval of the UNSCR 1325, additionally states that “women and girls are the targets of sexual violence, as a tactic of humiliation and domination.” This resolution also calls for “the protection of civilians including women and girls and take necessary measures for this purpose.” Engle (2014, pp. 23-47) argues that the UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 both exclusively put an emphasis on women and girls who are mostly seen as “vulnerable to sexual violence”.<sup>6</sup> The gendered positions and representations of women would be maintained through the additional categorisations provided by, for example, the UNSCR 1888 (2009). It principally supports women’s engagement in all levels of decision-making and the appointment of women as the senior positions in the peace missions.

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4 This argument therefore offers an analytical insight in examining the regional entities such as the EU, which also take part in and thus contribute to a gendered system of norms, rules, and procedures that exercise the global logic in security matters.

5 The term “gender mainstreaming” has appeared in the Third World Conference (1985) and then been used in the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995). The previous initiatives of the UN are the establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women (1946), the UN Decade for Women (1975-1985), the adoption of the convention on the Elimination of All Forms Discrimination Against Women in 1979.

6 The following resolutions also refer to “civilians, boys, and men as those who are also at risk” (see Engle, 2014, pp. 23-47).

The UNSCR 1960 (2010), likewise, further approves of the "inclusion of women in the peace processes particularly with the appointment of more women protection advisers to the peace missions." The UNSCR 2122 (2013) roughly endorses "the empowerment of women in conflict and post-conflict situations for the sake of the promotion of gender equality with the women's full participation and protection in the political processes of post-conflict reconstruction process." In addition, for the prevention of the sexual exploitation and abuse by the UN and non-UN forces including military, civilian and police personnel, all levels of authorities would provide training programmes and adequate investigations in cooperation with the national authorities (UNSCR 2272, 2016). Despite the UN's objective for the protection and inclusion of women in all stages of conflicts, the latest resolutions precisely reaffirm the long-term concerns over the continuing and serious "allegations of sexual violence and also abuse by United Nations peacekeepers in the United Nations as well as under-representation of women in peacebuilding processes" generally as stated in 2272 (2016), 2331 (2016), 2467 (2019) and 2492 (2019), 2493 (2019).

Bellamy and Williams (2005, pp. 17-38) observe that the UN peace operations, though, widely contribute to the construction of liberal polities rather than providing an opportunity for creation and continuation of an effective system to resolve conflicts between states. Likewise, as for an ideological perspective, liberalism characteristically raises an interventionist idea with its rhetoric of peace. For example, over time, in international environment, for the anti-militarist feminist groups, the UN peacekeeping has become one of the alternatives to the traditional (and national) combat forces particularly since the military operation in Afghanistan that was launched in 2001 (Hansen, 2006, pp.169-170). However, the UN peacekeeping has long been reputed to be ineffective as its presence has evidently created insecurity rather than security for women in various conflicting regions (Klot, 2015, pp. 736-737; see BBC News, 2017). This is because the liberal ideology in security terms is also interwoven with the militaristic view and the rationale of intervention. Such an argument surely refers to the motivation of intervention which can be regarded as the nature of state institution (Khalid, 2015, pp. 632-647; Enloe, 2004). However, feminist approach extensively criticises state-centric views and argues that security discourse has long been maintained as a "practice" of state and state-centric mechanisms (including internationalist ideas in the 20<sup>th</sup> century). Security is accordingly constructed through a language of strategy, legitimacy, control, protection and prevention in the same way state utilises security discourses in domestic and external environment (Foucault, 2007; Tickner, 2001). The UN, which derives its legitimacy from states ideologically embraces the notion of "militarised masculinity" (for the term "militarised masculinity" see Enloe, 2004).<sup>7</sup> For example, the UNSCR 1325 raises a question whether it can be paradoxically used for the legitimisation of intervention as a part of the UN system in the name of "protection of women" and consequently for the "victimisation of women" (Engle, 2014, pp. 23-26). George and Shepherd (2016, p. 301) also describe "intervention" as an "engagement with women in an essentialising, even imperialising, fashion as gendered and vulnerable actors who require little more than protection." Similarly, the notion of war and intervention filled with masculine culture also well fits into a gendered definition of peace that

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7 Cockburn (2012) views militarism and war as a process of forming masculinities.



signifies an inevitable association of women and peace. By this is meant that “peaceful women” is constructed as the opposite of “warrior men”. At this point, the UN’s discourse is mainly based on a “dichotomy between war and peace” (Tickner, 2001, pp. 13 – 60). However, it can under no circumstances eradicate the gender hierarchies. Such an essentialist view within the UN security mechanism on the connection between women and peace is thus seen as challenging to the idea of gender equality.

### 3. EU’s Perspective Towards the WPS in Discourse

The EU has constructed a “strategic” notion through traditional discourses of power, authority, and ideology. Admittedly, it is neither a state nor a typical international organisation. However, the EU pursues a strategic discourse claiming to provide security and to protect civilians, women, and girls in wartime (see, for example, Khalid, 2015, pp. 632-647). The EU’s international identity considerably persists state-centred and patriarchal conceptions of security.<sup>8</sup> To a certain extent, the EU can also be identified as a domain where sovereign state discourses are reproduced, strengthened, and thus contribute to the gendered patterns of power, hierarchies and relationships in the global system. On the other side, the EU’s premise that it is a “global actor” can also be viewed as an attempt to legitimise its own practices just as a state asserts its ideology and sovereignty in the current international system (Cebeci, 2012, pp. 566-69). Similarly, the EU’s institutional commitment to the UN for an “effective multilateralism” and both civilian and militaristic portrayals of the EU’s security culture seem to be of a reproductive international system as well as a part of its own historical, political and cultural expressions. For example, the EU openly conceptualises its “global role” through the discourses on cooperation with the UN, in particular, in short-term crisis management situations (Council of the European Union, 2003; European Council, 2016).

Basically, the EU’s approach has been made up of two main conceptual dimensions: “gender equality” and “gender mainstreaming”. It was an initial step taken by the Ministers of the EU who are responsible for the issues related to gender equality in February 2005 that they would take the measures to implement the UNSCR 1325 and to initiate a number of programmes and policies (Ministerial Declaration of the Conference of Ministers of Gender Equality, 2005). Gender mainstreaming in the EU also implies the creation of a vision towards “women and security” and adaptation of the existing institutions and policies of the Union to reach its goal in this regard.<sup>9</sup> The EU then established the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in 2006 to support gender equality in different policy areas such as migration, poverty, education, health, economy, justice, culture, and violence. Moreover, it supplies gender analysis, research, and data

8 The EU represents both a state-like unit and regional/international actor as its rhetoric of “post-modern entity” intensely sounds that of a sovereign and modern State (see, for example, Cebeci, 2012).

9 The responsibility for the implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and the follow-up resolutions is given to the Member States of the EU, the European Council, European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Delegations, the EEAS Principal Advisor on Gender and WPS, the Commission, EU Special Representatives, the High Representative and Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations and civil society organisations.

to the EU. Following the adoption of the UNSCR 1325, the EU published numerous documents such as the 2005 European Consensus on Development, the 2006 Commission Communication Roadmap to Gender Equality, the Commission Communication Roadmap to Gender Equality in Development Cooperation of March 2007, and the 2008 EU Concept for Support to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR). The EU also added UNSCR 1325 to the "Africa-EU Strategic Partnership", and delivered the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development (2010-2015), the EU Gender Action Plan II (2016-2020), the EU's Strategic Approach to WPS that was adopted in 2018, the EU Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2020), and EU's "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025".<sup>10</sup> Despite the attempts to develop its vision and policy to achieve gender equality, the EU's discourses on WPS still construct gender through the representations of women as victims from a protectionist view and as "agency" in keeping with the dominant gendered language of the global system.

### 3.1. Women "in Need of Protection"?

The adoption of the Comprehensive Approach for the Implementation of the UN Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in December 2008 is a significant step for the EU to propose a procedure that could put women in an "emancipatory value" (Otto and Heathcote, 2014, p.7). Thus, the achievement of "gender equality" would be possible through an inclusive security understanding rather than gender-based and militaristic security mechanisms. The EU also regards the Common Security and Defence Policy missions as the main tools for the fulfilment of the UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in crises (Official Journal of the European Union, 2010). However, regarding the textual language of the EU in the Comprehensive Approach, a "protectionist perspective" that is also derived from the language of the UN resolutions openly reinforces "masculine dependability"; the commitment of protecting those who become vulnerable in face of an attack; and consequently, interventionism (Otto, 2018, p. 113). In the EU's texts, women are represented as vulnerable, weak, and in need of assistance and protection mainly in wartime. The EU's Comprehensive Approach categorically evidences these standardised representations:

Contemporary conflicts affect civilian populations in particular, and in this context women have often become strategic targets, sometimes on a massive scale, as when rape is used as a tactic of warfare and ethnic cleansing. Many women and girls also become combatants' domestic and sexual slaves. Women are however not only victims of war and violence. They also play active roles as combatants, peace builders, politicians and activists. The equal participation of men and women in these roles is both an essential goal and means to help prevent and resolve conflicts and promote a culture of inclusive and sustainable peace (Council of the European Union, 2008).

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10 The EU's Action Plan on WPS (2019-2024) includes "the statements and assessments of the main objectives of the EU on the achievement of the gender equality" (Council of the European Union, 2019). See O'Connell (2013).

Despite the importance of the equal participation of women and men, from the text, it is inferred that the conflicts, wars and military institutions themselves predominantly organise the gender roles in a hierarchical system based on the constructions of masculinity. It widely constructs a discourse of “salvation of victimized women in particular from the patriarchal structures of the oppressing regimes” (Kennedy and Dingli, 2016, p. 158). More concretely, the EU’s Action Plan on WPS, for example, states that the EU “supports all efforts for institutional mechanisms for protection of women and girls as well as men and boys, in fragile environments and conflict affected contexts to help prevent all forms of sexual and gender-based violence” (Council of the European Union, 2019). The EU’s Strategic Approach to WPS also claims that it has gone further with the reassurance of “rights, agency and protection of women and girls and their participation in decision-making processes”(Council of the European Union, 2018). However, from a protectionist view, when gender-based violence is reduced to conflict-based sexual violence (for example, rape), a gender analysis – grounded on evidence – would then call for a new agenda for intervention in specific regions. In this perspective, the use of force can be considered to be justifiable and reasonable for the “protection of peacemakers and peacebuilders, especially of women, in post-agreement/transitional settings.” This context would do nothing but to aim to “make war safer” for women (Otto, 2018; Council of the European Union, 2019). For example, the emphasis on sexual vulnerability uttered by the UNSCR 1325 would merely shift the attention from preventing war to the negative impacts of war on women. Similarly, the UNSCR 1820 (2008) aims to “prevent sexual violence against women and girls” through the deployment of peacekeeping forces. Therefore, it can be argued that the gender analysis-based research here prioritises the protection of women in both conflict time and post-conflict time and maintains the traditional view on the role and place of women (see Boesten, 2018). Here lies an essentialist view attaching these roles to “women’s natural and biological features”. For example, for Whitworth (cited in Klot, 2015, p. 731), the UNSCR 1325 radically constructs gender throughout a “pathological relationship based on sexed bodies.” Rape and sexual torture are some of the forms of violence in military terms. Moreover, it vastly endorses many aspects of the relations between patriarchy and militarism: “Women’s vulnerability to sexual abuse” would also help to “rescue and even protect women” in turn. Such a stance can no longer end violence but surely keep it continue (Engle, 2014, p.33). The “myth of protection” would thus secure its existence through such discursive and operational cycles (Tickner, 2001). For example, the UNSCR 2242 (2015) demands “the increase in the number of women in peacekeeping that will also strengthen the effectiveness of the operations.” The EU’s Action Plan on WPS, similarly, addresses the “improvement of gender balance in CSDP missions and operations” (Council of the European Union, 2019). Thus, by the sound of inclusivity and participation of women in military operations, women could be seen in the “same category with men” in both representation and practice (Lazar, 2007, pp. 152-153). In addition, the EU’s Strategy, which specifies the gender-related causes of violence and encourages the EU to initiate an overall gender-responsive perspective, does not truly explain why violence recurs, continues and why military intervention is necessary for the conflict and post-conflict regions. Instead, the EU’s peace-oriented interventionism that is mostly manifested by the rhetoric of human rights in the EU’s humanitarian discourse proves the reverse of the

purpose (Council of the European Union, 2018). For example, there seems to be less emphasis on the recent resolutions in the Strategy, mainly on "continuing and serious allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers in the United Nations."<sup>11</sup> The EU could have a more precise vision for the subject such as trafficking. Considering that "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025" underscores "the trafficking of human beings both in and outside the EU", the EU could also take concrete steps in framing the issue in its security discourses (see European Commission, 2020).

In conclusion, the EU's strategy raises considerable criticism for having been founded on the patriarchally-shaped ideological and procedural settings. From both civilian and military sides, as Muehlenhoff (2017) argues, the neoliberal approach does not provide a reliable ground for the prevention of conflict-based sexual violence. It somewhat sustains the policy processes of global security structures along with a motivation for future military intervention in different regions. Mass killings of civilians and gender-related violence that leave women as "victim" and "in need of protection" are not natural consequences of war. Instead, violence against civilians, women and girls in war and peacetime adds up to "by-product of a deliberate strategy of the neoliberal regime". All in all, it is essential for the EU to establish a more inclusive and transformative security notion by addressing social inequalities (see Thompson, 2006, p. 344).

### 3.2. Women as an "Agency"

In particular, with the adoption of the EU's Strategic Approach in November 2018 the EU has showed a particular interest in furthering its institutional, technical and bureaucratic capacity. The EU's Strategy has seemingly advanced an inclusivity approach for women: "The integration of gender perspectives into all EU policies including security, conflict prevention and resolution as well as long-term peace-building" is regarded as the main objective to achieve "gender equality" (Council of European Union, 2018). According to the Strategy:

The EU Strategic Approach places the WPS Agenda at the centre of the full spectrum of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, as an essential tool in ensuring that the rights, agency and protection of women and girls are observed and upheld at all times, and to confirm that a meaningful and equitable role in decision-making is secured for women of all ages during all stages of conflict prevention, peace-making, peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation (Council of European Union, 2018).

The EU attempts to strengthen and diverge its functions as well as the capacity and to play a particular role in encouraging women to participate in all stages of conflict resolution and peace processes. Therefore, through a "meaningful and equitable" participation, women having an agency

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11 For example, the case of United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Issues such as "Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (and all forms of sexual exploitation) are placed in the UNSCRs 2272 (2016), 2331 (2016) (see Council of the European Union, 2018); See UNSC Resolutions 2467 (2019) and 2490 (2019).

role would be co-opted into the security system and expected to achieve certain goals (Kennedy and Dingli, 2016). In addition to that framework, the EU's approach to inclusivity would also be reinforced by gender analysis and collection of data. Seen itself as a model to promote normative values, the EU specifies its role as "gender equality promoter": "Neglecting to carry out gender analysis and to integrate a gender perspective would negatively impact on the EU's leading role as gender equality promoter" (Council of the European Union, 2018). Regarding the statements on "women's meaningful and equitable participation in peace and decision-making processes" the Strategic Approach aims to go much further beyond the previous documents:

Women are not only victims of war and violence. They also play diverse roles as, for example, combatants, peace builders, politicians, economic actors and activists. The equal participation of women and men is both an essential end and a way to prevent and resolve conflicts and promote a culture of inclusive and sustainable peace (Council of the European Union, 2018).

The EU, here, outlines a holistic approach towards the "achievement of peace" and is inclined to prioritise women as an agency in its engagement of gender-related issues in a violent environment. This system founded on the masculinised hegemony of the UN system overtly constitutes a sphere where gender persistently operates in different fields ranging from diplomatic to military (see, for example, Khalid, 2015). The EU's aim on peace well corresponds with "the achievement of gender equality." For example, in the Strategy, the EU aims to "promote women participation and leadership in humanitarian action and development programmes in both and informal decision-making and priority setting spaces" (Council of the European Union, 2018). Similarly, the role of women is placed in the EU's Action Plan: "Women's leadership, the participation of women's organisations and women rights defenders would also be involved in conflict-related settings and/or in conflict prevention, and peace negotiations, peacebuilding and humanitarian actions" (Council of European Union, 2019). More exactly, the Strategy represents women's position as an agent. It states that women have a vital role in the conflict management processes including "development, preventing and countering violent extremism, counterterrorism and migration." However, to exercise an agent role as a part of the neoliberal system is contradictory (Council of the European Union, 2018).

Although women's empowerment in peace processes is conditioned by "meaningful participation" of women, the textual language maintains "women's victimhood", mainly in conflict situations. In discourse, "meaningful participation"<sup>12</sup> regardless of essentialist views on the arguments of the interrelationship of "women and peace" could contribute to the achievement of "gender equality" insofar as peace is not symbolised and idealised in a liberal and interventionist narrative in general. Like military conflicts, military solutions can produce "natural roles of men and women" (see Moran, 2010). Ruby (2014, pp. 173-184) also observes that military intervention does not

12 "Meaningful participation" specifically signifies the participation of women's civil society and women's rights activists as well as other related actors in the decision making process to achieve peace.

make a difference for women; it only instrumentalizes the UNSCR 1325 and rationalizes military operations. For example, in the EU's Mainstreaming Human Rights and Gender into European Security and Defence Policy, it is indicated that: "Gender mainstreaming in the area of ESDP is not a goal in itself; the ultimate objective is to increase the EU's crisis management capacity by mobilising additional resources and exploiting the full potential of the human resources available." Muehlenhoff (2017, p.161), similarly, argues that "the EU renders women as military agency" and "resource" because of their role in the security and defence missions. However, such a contention might also support the patriarchal system where women are still represented as "victim" and increasingly an "object" who are expected to join the whole international activity on peace, war, or development. Thus, women in the system are considerably associated with a sense of "self-responsibility granted with adequate resources" (Muehlenhoff, 2017, p.163). In this sense, women and women organisations are also expected to be involved more actively in the efforts for humanitarian assistance delivery. However, women are viewed as aid providers and "first responders" in the relief and recovery categories. (Council of the European Union, 2018).

Although the EU uses an "equality" discourse, its call for women's inclusion in all the aspects of peace processes can be reduced to the confines of the male-dominant strategy making alongside the patriarchal characteristics of the system (Enloe, 2004). The inclusion of women is possible when women become those who "think, explain the problem or even reshape the order" and with the achievement of equality between women and men (Enloe, 2014, pp.97-98). Women's experiences based on context/s and their equal access to all sectors of social and economic life would be more effective in the elimination of gendered structures of security. However, women do not represent uniqueness; therefore, it would be more meaningful that the EU points to women's experiences regarding different backgrounds. For example, it could systematically document the experiences and analysis of the role of women, in particular, in mediation, and their inclusion in high-level peace processes (Davis, 2019). The EIGE (2020a) too asserts the role of experiences from both men and women in conflict and peacetime stating that "security is not gender-neutral". In its recent document that is on the "fifth review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform", the EU has emphasised the importance of inclusion of women in security and defence matters. For the EU, the main priority is to maintain gender-sensitive training and use of gender advisors; thus, its policies are comprising both armed conflict and diplomatic missions. However, such a notion, in particular, for the adaptation of the EU's gender mainstreaming into different policy areas remains inadequate when it comes to the security field. In other words, for example, migration can not be effectively incorporated into a general security framework in particular when the issue is widely related to "terrorism" in matters of the EU's internal security. However, more exactly, the fields of migration, asylum seeking and discrimination can not be considered without the external environment in constructing a notion of gender mainstreaming (EIGE, 2020b). In this regard, the EU can bring different but interrelated policies together and provide equality indicators for a wide range of areas, for example, including education, social policy, health and labour force. For example, the EU's "Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025", focusing on gender-based violence, calls for a coordination of all the policy areas



(European Commission, 2020). Likewise, the EIGE can produce knowledge, data analysis and policy frameworks for social practices and structures to achieve gender equality. In addition, the EU can also evaluate its strategy to WPS along with other security and gender related strategies .

#### **4. Conclusion**

This study has attempted to analyse the European Union's discourses on the relationship between gender and security and the representations of women as both victim and agency with regard to the UN's agenda on "Women, Peace and Security". The textual analysis is based on the EU's official documents including, for example, the Comprehensive Approach, the EU's Strategy to the "Women, Peace and Security" and "a Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". As a framework, WPS Agenda has initially been adopted with the UNSCR 1325 and its follow up resolutions. The main purposes of these resolutions are "prevention and resolution of conflicts, protection of women and girls from gender-based violence, prevention and recovery." Thus, the paper has portrayed the relationship between patriarchal and hierarchical forms of power and gender in defining the interconnection between security and women. This relationship is formed by the representations of women in written and spoken language. The theoretical approach of the study is comprising Critical Discourse Analysis, Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, post-structural approach, and a feminist critique on security. On the other hand, the UNSC Resolution 1325 has created an interest among the scholars of critical approach insofar as it would open up new discussions for the emancipatory aspects of feminist arguments. In general, security in both discourse and practice is viewed as a product of the current liberal international system; and gender as ideology constitutes one of the forms of this patriarchal ideology, hierarchal subordinations, and the exclusions and inclusions of this system. The EU's security imaginary in both war and peacetime, if not necessarily in militaristic form, has been co-opted into the UN's security mechanism. The EU has developed a gender perspective to achieve "gender equality" and thus generated a gender mainstreaming view through the establishment of a wide range of tools, strategies, institutions, procedures and structures.

Despite the shift in the EU's policy-making and strategy towards WPS in terms of inclusivity through meaningful participation, to some extent, the EU pursues a conventional view; for example, it utilises a logic of protectionism through the representations of women as "victim" and "in need of protection" as in the UN's discourse. Mainly grounded on the UN Resolutions of 1325 and 1820, the construction of the status of women seems problematic. Women are associated with biological and natural features representing vulnerability and weakness, mainly, in risky areas from an essentialist point of view. Likewise, the EU has attempted to take further steps for the advancement of gender mainstreaming to achieve its goal of gender equality by framing a vision for "women empowerment." This would be possible through the participation of women in all stages of peace-oriented policies. However, women as an agent within the EU's security structures, the sense of equality has been regarded women as the replacement for men, for example, in peacekeeping operations. In the same way, in decision-making processes, women,



regardless of any ethnocentric categories, need to be involved in an inclusive security area rather than solely a gendered, context and conflict-based situation. On the other hand, to further its gender perspective, the EU has also adopted a notion towards gender equality pointing to poverty, inequality, deprivation, religious and ethnic differences as gender inequality indicators in its "Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025". Likewise, the European Institute for Gender Equality has roughly framed a vision combining women and security concerning different policy areas. However, the patriarchal and all aspects of inequality between men and women and among women, representations of women, and the construction of existing liberal security patterns through discourses could still contribute to the legitimisation of reproduction of this unequal system.

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## The European Union's Crisis Management Operations in Support of the United Nations in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Question of Legitimacy

Avrupa Birliği'nin Birleşmiş Milletlere Destek Amacıyla Sahra-Altı Afrika'da Yürütmüş Olduğu Kriz Yönetimi Operasyonları: Meşruiyet Meselesi

Taylan Özgür KAYA\* 

### Abstract

This article aims to analyse legitimacy of military crisis management operations carried out by the EU in support of the UN in sub-Saharan Africa by using Mark Suchman's typology of organizational legitimacy including pragmatic, moral and cognitive legitimacy. These three types of legitimacy are tested through analysing four cases in which EU has engaged in sub-Saharan Africa in support of the UN: Operation Artemis (2003), EUFOR RD CONGO (2006), EUFOR Tchad/RCA (2008-2009) and EUFOR RCA (2014-2015). In terms of pragmatic legitimacy, the EU enjoys high level of legitimacy, because these operations served both institutional interests of the EU and self-interests of some member states, particularly France. With regard to moral legitimacy, the EU suffers from a legitimacy deficit. Although declared motives for the launch of these operations was to help the UN in fulfilling its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, indeed, EU engagement in these crisis management operations was to a significant degree driven by the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states. Moreover, all operations were UN-mandated autonomous EU military operations rather than integrated EU troops in UN-led operations. Thus, real motivation for launching the operations and their modalities undermined moral legitimacy of these operations, because it casted doubts on whether these operations have served the global common good or not. Furthermore, EU's utilitarian, selective and self-interested use of its crisis management tool puts limit on the EU's future reliability and taken-for-grantedness as a UN partner in protecting and promoting international peace and security, and thus resulted in cognitive legitimacy deficit.

**Keywords:** European Union, United Nations, Crisis Management, sub-Saharan Africa, Legitimacy

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## Öz

Bu makalenin amacı, AB'nin Birleşmiş Milletlere (BM) destek olmak amacıyla Sahra-altı Afrika bölgesinde yürütmüş olduğu askeri kriz yönetimi operasyonlarının meşruiyetini Mark Suchman'ın pragmatik, ahlaki ve bilişsel olmak üzere üçlü bir sınıflandırmaya tabi tuttuğu örgütsel meşruiyet tipolojisi çerçevesinde analiz etmektir. Bu üçlü meşruiyet tipolojisi, Birliğin Sahra-altı Afrika bölgesinde BM'ye destek olmak amacıyla yürütmüş olduğu dört askeri kriz yönetimi operasyonu çerçevesinde değerlendirilecektir: Artemis Operasyonu (2003), EUFOR RD CONGO (2006), EUFOR Tchad/RCA (2008-2009) ve EUFOR RCA (2014-2015). Bütün operasyonların hem Birliğin kurumsal çıkarlarına hem de Fransa gibi önde gelen üye devletlerin bölgesel çıkarlarına hizmet etmesi, Birliğe yüksek düzeyde bir pragmatik meşruiyet sağlamaktadır. Buna karşılık ahlaki ve bilişsel meşruiyet açılarından Birlik ciddi bir meşruiyet açığı ile karşı karşıyadır. Her ne kadar Birlik, bu operasyonların başlatılma sebebini BM'ye temel sorumluluğu olan uluslararası barış güvenliği koruma konusunda destek olma olarak açıklamış olsa da esas neden gerek Birliğin kurumsal çıkarları gerekse bazı üye devletlerin özel çıkarlarının korunmasıdır. Bunun yanında, bu operasyonlar, Birlik askerlerinin doğrudan BM komutası altındaki bir operasyona katılımından ziyade BM tarafından yetkilendirilmiş bağımsız AB operasyonlarıdır. Bu iki özellik yani operasyonların gerisindeki gerçek motivasyon ve operasyonların yürütülme tarzı bu operasyonların ahlaki meşruiyetini zayıflatmaktadır. Bunun temel nedeni ise bu iki özelliğin, bu operasyonların küresel ortak fayda olan uluslararası barış ve güvenliğin korunması amacıyla başlatılıp başlatılmadığı konusunda ciddi şüphelere neden olmasıdır. Ayrıca, Birliğin kriz yönetimi aracını faydacı, seçici ve öz çıkarları için kullanması, uluslararası barış ve güvenliğin korunmasında BM'nin partneri olarak Birliğin gelecekteki güvenilirliğini azaltmakta ve bu şekilde de kriz yönetimi operasyonlarının bilişsel meşruiyetini zayıflatmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Avrupa Birliği, Birleşmiş Milletler, Kriz Yönetimi, Sahra-altı Afrika, Meşruiyet

## 1. Introduction

Since the EU and the UN have complementary political interests, shared norms and values, and operational interdependence, they have been regarded as natural partners (Peters, 2011, p. 644). They share a wide range of norms and values and an ideal of the establishment of a rule-based and peaceful international order based on effective multilateralism. They cooperate in a wide range of areas including the protection and promotion of global peace and security, and the provision of development and humanitarian assistance (Peters, 2011, p. 645). In terms of protection and promotion of global peace and security, the strengthening of EU-UN cooperation in the field of crisis management is mutually beneficial. On the one hand, the crisis management capability developed by the EU within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) can be utilized by the UN in carrying out its responsibility to protect and promote global peace and security. On the other hand, the UN is a body which has the authority to provide legitimacy for the EU's conflict and crisis management activities and for its effort to become an important global security actor (Peters, 2011, p. 645). The mutually beneficial relationship between the EU and the UN has been clearly seen in sub-Saharan African cases discussed in this article, the UN missions provided a strategic framework for EU crisis management operations in return for EU's provision of vital military support to UN missions at challenging security environments (Gowan, 2009, p. 119). In addition, as it will be seen in our case studies, through connecting the CSDP with the UN, the EU was able to present its defence identity as part of a global collective security strategy (Gowan, 2009, p. 119). Moreover, the EU is seen as a perfect partner for the UN, which

has been looking for reliable and like-minded partners having the necessary capabilities, including rapid reaction capacity and well-developed communications, intelligence and logistics facilities in order to share its increasing logistical and financial burden of global peacekeeping (Hadden, 2009, p. 54). On the EU side, through complementing their significant contribution to the UN regular budget with an effective partnership with the UN in the area of crisis management, EU member states expect to boost the Union's international visibility (Hadden, 2009, p. 54).

These factors led the two organizations to cooperate in the area of crisis management and their cooperation in this field was formalized by two documents which were signed and jointly declared by both organizations: "2003 Joint Declaration on UN-EU Co-operation in Crisis Management" and "2007 Joint Statement on UN-EU cooperation in Crisis Management". In both documents, the two organizations confirmed their mutual commitment to an international order based on effective multilateralism; they reaffirmed their determination to work together in the area of crisis management. Both organizations acknowledged that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the UN Security Council, in accordance with the UN Charter. While the UN acknowledged the EU's considerable contribution of human and material resources in crisis management, the EU re-emphasized its commitment to contribute to the objectives of the UN in crisis management.

Against this backdrop, this article aims to analyse legitimacy of military crisis management operations carried out by the EU in support of the UN by using Mark Suchman's typology of organizational legitimacy including pragmatic, moral and cognitive legitimacy. These three types of legitimacy are tested through examining four cases in which EU has engaged in support of the UN in sub-Saharan Africa: EU's two military crisis management operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Operation Artemis (2003), EUFOR RD CONGO (2006), EU military crisis management operation in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR) – EUFOR Tchad/RCA (2008-2009) and EU military crisis management operation in CAR – EUFOR RCA (2014-2015). In the first part, Suchman's typology of organizational legitimacy will be discussed. In the second part, the legitimacy of EU's crisis management operations in support of the UN will be analyzed by using Suchman's typology of organizational legitimacy.

## **2. Operationalizing Legitimacy**

Max Weber was widely recognized as the social theorist, who introduced the concept of legitimacy into sociological theory and organization studies (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008, p. 50). Weberian conceptualization of legitimacy is related with political authority and signifies the degree to which a political order is recognized by its subjects as having a valid claim to rule. The distinctive feature of Weberian understanding of legitimate rule is the mode of obedience; for Weber, if subjects obey commands of the rulers as a maxim of action, its authority is deemed legitimate in the eyes of subjects. For Weber, there are three sources or types of political legitimacy: rational-legal in which obedience is based on the legally established impersonal order, traditional in which



obedience is based on the person of the chief occupying the traditionally sanctioned position of authority, and charismatic in which obedience is based on putative exceptional qualities of a leader (Smith, 1970, pp. 18-19). Weber also emphasized the significance of social practice being directed by rules and suggested that legitimacy can arise from conformity with both general social norms and formal laws (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008, p. 50). Following in footsteps of Weber, Talcott Parsons defined legitimacy as conformity of an organization to social laws, norms and values (Deephouse, et. al., 2016, p. 5). Weberian and Parsonian conceptualization of legitimacy has been adopted by many organization theorists; legitimacy of an organization is evaluated through examining whether its acts are in conformity with established social laws, norms and values or not (Deephouse et. al., 2016, p. 5).

Mark Suchman further developed this conceptualization of legitimacy and put forward a comprehensive definition of legitimacy. He defined legitimacy as “a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995, p. 574). He offered three-fold classification of legitimacy, including pragmatic legitimacy, moral legitimacy, and cognitive legitimacy.

Pragmatic legitimacy takes its source from the self-interested calculations of an organization’s most immediate audiences. Here audiences or sources of legitimation are main constituencies, who scrutinize organizations and assess their legitimacy (Suchman, 1995, p. 578). In other words, if immediate audiences of an organization consider actions of an organization serve their interests, these actions are deemed legitimate. Within the context of this article, in the EU case, immediate audiences or sources of legitimation are member states especially in the area of security and defence policy due to its intergovernmental nature. Concerning the military crisis management operations, if some or all member states considered that a crisis management operation serves their interests, this operation is deemed legitimate.

Second type of legitimacy, moral legitimacy is based on judgements about whether the activity of an organization is the right thing to do or whether the activity promotes societal welfare as defined by the audience’s socially constructed value system rather than a self-interested calculation of an evaluator (Suchman, 1995, p. 579). In this study, moral legitimacy of EU operations can be evaluated through testing whether these operations have served the global common good through helping the UN in maintaining international peace and security.

The last type of legitimacy, cognitive legitimacy is based on cognition instead of interest or evaluation. Cognitive legitimacy is based on comprehensibility and taken-for-grantedness (Suchman, 1995, p. 582). According to comprehensibility, legitimacy arises from the availability of cultural models which offer a reasonable explanation for the existence and actions of an organization. If such models exist, actions of an organization are considered as predictable, meaningful and inviting (Suchman, 1995, p. 582). For Suchman (1995, p. 583), depending on the extent of its attainability, taken-for-grantedness is the most subtle and the most powerful source

of legitimacy and an organization attains such kind of legitimacy, if its existence and activities are deemed as inevitable, unrivalled and incontestable by construction. While comprehensibility is based on predictability and plausibility, taken-for-grantedness is based on inevitability and permanence (Suchman, 1995, p. 584). In this article, the cognitive legitimacy of the EU as a crisis manager is tested through evaluating comprehensibility and taken-for-grantedness of the EU as a UN partner in protecting and promoting international peace and security.

### **3. Operation Artemis**

The EU military operation in the DRC, code-named Operation Artemis, which was launched with the decision of the Council of the EU on 12 June 2003, was the first peacekeeping mission conducted outside the geographical boundaries of Europe by a European institution. It was also the first CSDP operation in Africa. It was launched upon the request by the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in order to provide a temporary stabilisation force in the Ituri Region in implementation of the mandate provided by the UN Security Council Resolution 1484 (2003) of 30 May 2003.

The mandate of the mission was to contribute to the stabilization of the security conditions and the improvement of the humanitarian situation in the Ituri capital, Bunia, to ensure the protection of the airport, the internally displaced persons in the camps in Bunia, and if the situation necessitates it, to contribute to the safety of the civilian population, UN personnel and the humanitarian presence in the town until UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC) could be reinforced (UNSC, 2003). Thus, Artemis was a 'bridging operation' which had a limited ambition, duration, geographic reach and functioned as an interim force for stabilizing the situation in Bunia until the arrival of reinforced MONUC.

The operation was an autonomous EU-led crisis management operation with recourse to a Framework Nation and France was designated as the framework nation. France provided the command and control capabilities necessary for the planning, launch and management of the Operation Artemis, the Operational Headquarters for the mission and the majority of personnel (1,700 out of 2,000) including the Operation Commander and Force Commander. Indeed, the operation was an UN-authorized independent EU-led operation conducted by France with the collaboration of other countries under the EU flag.

Although the main motivation for the launch of the operation appeared to help the UN in fulfilling its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, indeed, the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, particularly France were more decisive regarding the launch of the Operation Artemis. First of all, concerning institutional interests of the Union, French leadership believed that Artemis provided a great opportunity to test newly-emerged security and defence policy of the EU (Koepf, 2012, p. 340). It was also believed to provide an opportunity to demonstrate the EU's ability to act independently from NATO (Olsen, 2009, p. 251). Another significant reason related with the institutional interests of

the EU was that two pioneers of the CSDP, France and the United Kingdom (UK), considered this operation as a heaven-sent opportunity to overcome the deep divisions among the EU member states caused by the Iraq War in the spring of 2003, and thus, reenergize European cooperation on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the CSDP, which was shattered due to internal divisions over the Iraq War (Olsen, 2009, p. 257; Congo mission tests Europe's military policy, 2003; Homan, 2006, p. 153; Ulriksen, Gourlay & Mace, 2004, p. 512; Rodt, 2011, p. 105). It can be said that it was an attempt by the Member States to prove that they could still cooperate and that the CFSP/CSDP was still alive (Olsen, 2009, p. 251).

Concerning individual interests of the Member States, France had a vested interest in launching the operation. First of all, since France was the lead nation and it contributed the largest number of troops, the operation enabled France to be recognized politically as an effective military actor (Olsen, 2009, p. 251; Gegout, 2005, p. 437). The Artemis was also a good opportunity for France for demonstrating its own defence capabilities: through the Artemis, France was present in the DRC before other international actors. The operation helped to boost French prestige on the international scene (Gegout, 2005, p. 437). Secondly, through sending an EU mission instead of a uniquely French intervention, France limited the risk of casualties for its troops. In contrast to his close relations with the UK, Rwandan President Paul Kagame had frosty relations with France. French leadership believed that the presence of British troops in the field would provide some kind of defensive shield for French troops against any possible Rwandan intervention in Bunia against the French and British troops (Gegout, 2005, p. 438). Thus, the operation enabled France to reduce its own transaction costs through sharing them among other member states, and gain the legitimacy afforded by the EU itself (Ginsberg & Penksa, 2012, p. 43). Thirdly, the operation provided a good opportunity for France to repair its tainted image due to its failure to stop genocide in Rwanda (Gegout, 2005, p. 436). Fourthly, the operation enabled France, which has been strong supporter of the establishment of a European-only defence capability independent from the USA for many years, to reinforce the EU's independence vis-à-vis the USA in the defence field. The operation provided an opportunity for demonstrating that the EU was capable of acting with one voice – after the Iraq crisis – and without the USA (Gegout, 2005, p. 437). Fifthly, another reason for France to push for the launch of the operation and take on a leading role was the protection of its vital economic interests in the DRC, which were at stake due to instability and chaos in the country. The DRC has been one of the biggest trade partners of France: being France's biggest trade surplus in Central Africa and having the fourth biggest market share of French products in Francophone Africa. Moreover, the DRC was the sixth biggest market for French products among sub-Saharan African countries and France was the DRC's second biggest supplier, after China. France has also been the biggest foreign direct investor in the DRC; approximately 200 French companies have been active in the country (FMEFA, 2017). Most prominent among them, French oil company Total has a significant presence as the country's leading exploration and production operator and biggest petroleum product retailer (Total, 2019). It has carried out important off-shore drilling projects in the DRC, such as the Moho Nord deep offshore project. (FMEFA, 2017).

Since it was launched and implemented with a mandate provided by the UN Security Council Resolution, its international legitimacy was beyond doubt. However, with regard to Suchman's typology of legitimacy, there are problems. First of all, in terms of pragmatic legitimacy, which is based on audience's self-interest, the EU enjoys high level of legitimacy, because the operation served both the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, particularly France. Concerning moral legitimacy, the EU suffers from a legitimacy deficit. Although the main motivation of the operation was declared to help the UN through contributing to the improvement of security and humanitarian situation in the Ituri capital, Bunia, indeed, EU engagement in crisis management operation was to a significant degree driven by the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states. Moreover, the operation was a UN-mandated independent EU military operation rather than integrated EU troops in UN-led operations. Thus, true or foremost motivation of EU Member States for launching the operation and its modality undermined moral legitimacy of the operation, because it casted doubts on whether it has served the global common good through helping the UN in maintaining international peace and security.

#### **4. Operation EUFOR RD CONGO**

During the presidential and parliamentary election campaign in the spring of 2006 in the DRC, maintenance of order in Kinshasa was recognized by the UN as a key element for the success of the electoral process (Olsen, 2009, p. 253). On 25 April 2006, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1671 (2006), which authorised the temporary deployment of a EU force (EUFOR RD Congo) to support MONUC during the period encompassing the elections in the DRC. Upon UN Security Council's authorization, the EU Foreign Affairs Council decided to launch the Operation EUFOR RD Congo by adopting a Joint Action on the EU military operation in support of the MONUC during the election process on 27 April 2006. The mandate of the mission was to contribute to the protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, without prejudice to the responsibility of the Congolese Government, contribute to airport protection in Kinshasa, ensure the security and free movement of EUFOR RD Congo personnel and the protection of its installations and execute limited operations to extract individuals in danger (UNSC, 2006). The military operation was launched on 12 June 2006 by Council Decision 2006/412/CFSP and ended on 30 November 2006. The EUFOR RD Congo was conducted within the framework of the CSDP and was assigned to support MONUC to stabilize the situation during the election process, protect civilians and protect the airport in Kinshasa. The military deployment, with the operational headquarters provided by Germany, included an advance element of almost 1,000 soldiers in and around Kinshasa. The EU also had available almost 1,200 troops on-call 'over the horizon' in neighbouring Gabon from where they could be rapidly deployed if necessary (Olsen, 2009, p. 253). When compared to Artemis, it was a stand-by operation (EU-led operation in support of an existing UN mission – MONUC) with a very narrow mandate which aimed to provide additional security to support the electoral process in the capital of Kinshasa (Tull, 2012, p. 138).

Although the political motivation for the launch of the operation seemed to help the UN, indeed, just like the Operation Artemis, the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, particularly France were more decisive regarding the launch of the EUFOR RD Congo. First of all, concerning institutional interests of the Union, it was seen by some member states, in particular France and Germany as a significant opportunity to recover from the debacle over the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in the referendums in France and the Netherlands in 2005 through demonstrating that they could still cooperate in the area of security and defence policy. (Olsen, 2009, pp. 253, 257) That is why the operation was identified by senior experts on EU's security and defence policy as a cosmetic operation which was a cover to hide main rationale of the operation, bolstering the credibility of the CSDP after the fiascos of the Constitutional Referendum (Haine & Giegerich, 2006; Howorth, 2007, p. 239). Thus, the main rationale for launching the Operation was to establish the EU as an international actor and prove that it could still function and make foreign policy despite domestic crisis (Olsen, 2009, p. 254). While assessing the success of the Operation, Bastian Giegerich (2008, p. 32) argued that the main achievement of the operation was symbolic: it demonstrated the EU capacity for action in general and particularly, in support of the UN which helped to build confidence and add to the body of shared CSDP experience among EU member states. However, the long-term impact of the operation on peace and stability in the DRC was unclear (Giegerich, 2008, p. 32).

With regard to individual interests of the Member States, maintaining security and stability in the DRC has been of particular interest to France. First of all, as it was mentioned in the previous part, France has vital economic interests in the DRC. Secondly, France, as an ex-colonial power in the region, has been actively engaged in the DRC and in the wider region for years. However, since France had a tainted image in the region due to its failure to stop genocide in Rwanda, it would be less risky and costly to carry out a military operation under the EU flag and EU command than a uniquely French one (Olsen, 2009, p. 254). Moreover, it was also a good opportunity for France to repair its tainted image. Thus, France instrumentalized the EU to take care of its concerns about the DRC's stability; in other words, it tried to multilateralize its own national interests.

In terms of pragmatic legitimacy, similar to the Artemis, the EU enjoys high level of legitimacy, because it served both the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, in particular France. With regard to moral legitimacy, the EU suffers from a legitimacy deficit, because the declared motivation of the operation does not fully coincide with true motivation. Even though it was declared that the operation was launched to help the UN through contributing to the protection of civilians from physical violence, the protection of Kinshasa airport, ensuring the security and free movement of EUFOR RD Congo personnel and the protection of its installations and execute limited operations to extract individuals in danger, indeed, it was significantly driven by the institutional interests of the EU and particular interests of some member states. Furthermore, it was a UN-mandated autonomous EU military operations instead of integrated EU troops in UN-led operations. Hence, inconsistency between declared and true motivation for launching the operation and its modality undermined its moral

legitimacy, because it was doubtful whether it has served the global common good through helping the UN in maintaining international peace and security.

## **5. Operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA**

The EU military operation in the Republic of Chad and CAR (Eastern Chad and the North-eastern CAR), which was launched on 28 January 2008 by Council Decision 2008/101/CFSP and conducted under the CSDP, with the agreement of the governments of Chad and CAR, had been carried out between 28 January 2008 and 15 March 2009, under the mandate provided by UN Security Council Resolution 1778 (25 September 2007). The mandate of the mission was to contribute to protecting refugees from the Darfur region and internally displaced people, to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, and to contribute to the protection of UN personnel in the region. The operation, in other words, aimed to contribute to a 'safe and secure environment' in the region (Dijkstra, 2010, p. 395). It was the largest autonomous military operation of the EU so far, with 3,700 troops and its area of operation was in a remote part of Africa (Dijkstra, 2010, p. 405). Just like the Operation Artemis, it was a bridging operation which had a limited ambition, duration, geographic reach and functioned as an interim force for supporting and protecting refugees from Darfur and internally displaced people from the region and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel until the UN Mission in CAR and Chad (MINURCAT) has taken over the authority of the operation. It was the most multinational military operation deployed in Africa so far, with 14 EU Member States present in the field, 19 in theatre, and 22 at the Operation Headquarters at Mont Valérien (France) (CEU, 2009). During its mandate, in order to secure the area, EUFOR conducted numerous patrols, large-scale operations in areas where it did not have permanent camps and carried out air missions (CEU, 2009). When the operation ended, about % 60 of EUFOR, some 2,200 troops, moved to MINURCAT and it continued to provide logistical support to MINURCAT for the beginning of its operation (Dijkstra, 2010, p. 403).

Although the foremost motivation for the launch of the operation appeared to help the UN, indeed, just like other two missions in the DRC, EU engagement in Operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA was to a significant degree driven by the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, particularly France. First of all, concerning institutional interests of the Union, French leadership believed that EUFOR Tchad/RCA would enable to demonstrate that the EU was an independent international conflict manager, at least in Africa (Olsen, 2009, p. 256). In addition to France, most of European governments regarded this operation as an opportunity for the EU to demonstrate its effectiveness as a security actor in the conflict-prone Darfur region following the failure of the UN mission to Darfur (UNMID) (Berg, 2009, p. 62). Moreover, this operation was also well suited to the French policy of promoting the CSDP through emphasizing its military character rather than purely civilian one (Seibert, 2010, p. 10). The operation provided an invaluable opportunity to enhance the operational experience of the



CSDP, boost EU's credibility as a military actor and increase EU's involvement in Africa (Rodt, 2011, p. 113).

Concerning individual interests of the Member States, France had a special interest in launching the operation. As the ex-colonial power, France had a particular interest in maintaining the stability in Chad. France, which had signed defence and military cooperation agreements with Chadian government after its independence and had established a permanent military presence (Operation EPERVIER) in 1986, had a vested interest in Chad's stability (Dijkstra, 2010, p. 397). These agreements included confidential clauses envisaging the protection of pro-French authoritarian leaders from any domestic armed insurrection in return for protection of French interests in the region (Bono, 2011, p. 29). As a part of these agreements, France had deployed at least 3,000 troops in Chad to support the pro-French government and contribute to stabilizing the country since the mid-1980s (Olsen, 2009, p. 255). The true motive of the French leadership for pushing for EUFOR Tchad/RCA was to help pro-French despotic regimes of Idriss Déby in Chad and François Bozizé in the CAR to stabilize their countries and thus secure the survival of their regimes (Bono, 2011, p. 38; Tull, 2012, p. 138). Thus, France aimed to multilateralize and Europeanise its military commitments in Chad and the CAR through launching a EU military operation rather than a purely French one (Bono, 2011, p. 39). That's why France took the lead in launching the operation and given the problems in supplying sufficient soldiers to the mission, France committed to 'plug the gaps' and promised to fulfil logistical requirements, including helicopters and transport aircraft. France provided about 2,000 soldiers stationed in the country as a part of operation EPERVIER and a general as force commander (Olsen, 2009, p. 255).

In terms of pragmatic legitimacy, like the previous two operations, since the operation was launched to promote both the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, particularly France, the EU enjoys high level of legitimacy. Regarding moral legitimacy, the EU suffers from a legitimacy deficit. Although it was declared that the operation was launched to help the UN through contributing to protection of refugees from the Darfur region and internally displaced people, to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, and contributing to the protection of UN personnel in the region, indeed, EU engagement in this crisis management operation was to a significant degree driven by the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states. Moreover, this operation was a UN-mandated independent EU military operation instead of integrated EU troops in UN-led operation. Thus, true or foremost motivation of EU Member States for launching the operation and its modality undermined its moral legitimacy, because it raised doubts whether it has served the global common good through helping the UN in maintaining international peace and security.

## **6. Operation EUFOR RCA**

The EU military operation in the CAR, which was launched on 1 April 2014 by Council Decision 2014/183/CFSP and conducted under the CSDP had been carried out between 30 April 2014



and 15 March 2015, under the mandate provided by UN Security Council Resolution 2134 (28 January 2014). The mandate of the mission was to contribute to the creation of a safe and secure environment in the Bangui, the capital of the CAR, particularly at the M'Poko airport, district 3 and 5, to create security conditions required for provision of humanitarian aid to those in need, to prepare the transfer of authority for UN or AU operation, to support the activities of the other international operations in the area, particularly French Operation Sangaris and the African Union (AU)-led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA: *Mission Internationale de Soutien à la Centrafrique Sous Conduite Africaine*) (Mandrup, 2017, p. 181). Just like the Operation Artemis and the Operation EUFOR Tchad/RCA, it was a bridging operation which had a limited ambition, duration, geographic reach and functioned as an interim force for contributing to the creation of a safe and secure environment in two districts of Bangui and the airport, and setting the stage for the provision of humanitarian aid to affected population until the redesigned and upgraded UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA) has taken over the authority of the operation. It was also a stand-by operation, which was conducted parallel and in support of the French Operation Sangaris and the AU-led MISCA, aimed to relieve their operational burden in the protection of civilians, restoration of security and public order, stabilization of the country and the creation of safe environment for humanitarian assistance. When compared to EU's previous military engagements in sub-Saharan Africa, the EUFOR RCA Operation was the smallest one in terms of deployed troops, only 750 combat troops were deployed; 18 EU Member States and 2 third countries, Georgia and Montenegro, contributed personnel to the Operation. Like Operation Artemis, France was designated as the framework nation and provided the bulk of the force with 400 troops. Similar with the previous EU operations in sub-Saharan Africa, it was an UN-authorized independent EU-led operation conducted by France with the collaboration of other countries under the EU flag.

Like the previous military operations in sub-Saharan Africa, the ostensible goal of the EUFOR RCA was to help the UN in maintaining international peace and security, but indeed the true reason behind EU's engagement was to promote the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, particularly France. With regard to institutional interests of the EU, the operation provided another great opportunity to prove EU's adequacy as a globally acting, independent and effective security actor, which has the capability and willingness to manage crisis in tough geographies like sub-Saharan Africa. Another reason which was put forward by Thierry Tardy (2014) was that this operation provided a heaven-sent opportunity for EU member states to put into practice their strong commitment to enhance the effectiveness, visibility and impact of the CSDP, which was emphasized in European Council Conclusion of 19-20 December 2013, titled as "Defence Matters". Thus, Tardy (2014) argued that this operation was seen as a great opportunity to demonstrate that security and defence issues were still significant for EU member states.

Similar to the previous three operations, France, as the ex-colonial power, had a special interest in maintaining the stability in the CAR and thus launching the operation. First and foremost, France has vital economic interests in the CAR, which were at stake due to instability and chaos

in the country. France has been leading foreign direct investor in the country; French companies including Orange, Air France, Bolloré, Castel, Somdiaa and Total have significant presence in the CAR (FMEFA, 2019).

Following the fall of Bozizé Regime as a result of Seleka assault on the Bangui, the country fell into instability and chaos in 2013 due to the conflict between mostly Muslim Seleka fighters and mostly Christian anti-Balaka fighters. When it was realized that the situation has been deteriorating quickly and the clash between these conflicting groups began to turn into a humanitarian crisis due to attacks against civilian populations, with the authorization of the UN Security Council, France launched the Operation Sangaris in support of the AU-led MISCA for protecting civilian population from the uncontrolled and escalating sectarian and interethnic violence and a possible genocide in December 2013. When French leadership realized that the situation in the CAR had become too difficult for them to handle on its own following the death of its two soldiers, they tried to convince its EU partners to launch a CSDP operation to relieve its financial and operational burden in the restoration and maintenance of security and stability in the CAR (Nováky, 2016, p. 99). Another possible reason behind French willingness to launch an operation was that this crisis provided another good opportunity for France to repair its tainted image due to its failure to stop genocide in Rwanda. It was believed that through a prompt military intervention, France could prevent the emergence of Rwandan-like genocide and thus repair its tainted image. Although France intended to repair its tainted image, the Operation Sangaris further deteriorated French image in the CAR. Since their deployment, French troops concentrated on the disbandment and disarmament of Seleka fighters while ignoring anti-Balaka militias (Kane, 2014, p. 315; Borowski, 2014). This made Muslim population vulnerable to attacks by Christian anti-Balaka fighters and they seized this opportunity and increased their attacks on Muslim population. Muslim population began to consider that French troops were supporting anti-Balaka fighters and French intervention was biased against them. Muslim people began to see French troops as part of the problem and identify them as the white anti-Balaka and likened their situation with Rwanda (Smith, 2014). This situation resulted in the feeling of enmity against French troops among Muslim population and decreased legitimacy of the Operation Sangaris. This left France with little choice but to push for the launch of the EU operation. This operation constituted another case of multilateralization and Europeanization of French interests in sub-Saharan Africa.

With regard to legitimacy of the operation, like all three previous operations, since the EUFOR RCA served both the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states, in particular France, the EU enjoys high level of pragmatic legitimacy. Concerning moral legitimacy, the EU suffers from a legitimacy deficit. Although the main motivation of the operation was declared to help the UN through contributing to the creation of a safe and secure environment in some districts of the capital city, to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid, to prepare the transfer of authority for a UN operation, to support the activities of French Operation Sangaris and the AU-led MISCA, EU engagement in this crisis management operation was in essence driven by the institutional interests of the EU and particular interests of some member

states. Furthermore, like all other operations, it was a UN-mandated independent EU military operation rather than integrated EU troops in UN-led operations. Hence, true or foremost motivation of EU Member States for launching the operation and its modality undermined moral legitimacy of it, because it is doubtful whether it has served the global common good through helping the UN in maintaining international peace and security.

## 7. Conclusion

All four operations reveal that while the Union enjoys a high level of legitimacy with regard to pragmatic legitimacy, it suffers from a legitimacy deficit when it comes to moral and cognitive legitimacy. Since all operations served both institutional interests of the EU and self-interests of some member states, in particular France, pragmatic legitimacy of the operations has increased. With regard to Union's institutional interests, these operations provided significant opportunity for the EU to prove itself as a globally acting, independent and effective security and defence policy actor even after severe internal crisis, such as Iraq Crisis in 2003 and Constitutional Treaty Referendum fiasco in 2005. With regard to interests of member states, the operations provided France with a significant opportunity to pursue its interests in the *Françafrique*<sup>1</sup> under a UN mandate and within EU framework. All operations enabled France to reengage in areas of its former colonies. France instrumentalized the UN authorization and the EU's institutional framework to help stabilize its former colonial lands with which it has still maintained close political, economic and even military ties. In other words, these operations enabled France to multilateralize and Europeanize its own national interests. Many experts on EU's security and defence policy underline French instrumentalization of these operations. While some put forward that EU framework together with UN authorization provided France some kind of protective shield against charges of neo-colonialism (Wouters, De Jong & De Man, 2010, pp. 20-21), some others assert that they enabled France to present itself as friendly and safe intervener through hiding its notorious past in the region behind the positive image of the EU (Bailes, 2008, p. 120). In addition, another prominent expert identified French instrumentalization as a 'dirty laundering', which allowed France to hide its pursuit of narrow national interest behind an EU cover (Mennon, 2009, p. 240). Moreover, these operations also provided an opportunity for France to prove itself as an effective military actor and to restore its image damaged by its biased intervention in Rwanda.

With regard to moral legitimacy, the EU suffers from a legitimacy deficit. Although the main motivation of these operations was declared to help the UN in fulfilling its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, indeed, EU engagement in these crisis management operations was to a significant degree driven by the institutional interests of the EU and interests of some individual member states. Moreover, all operations were independent EU military operations mandated by the UN instead of integrated EU troops in UN-led operations.

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1 This concept refers to France's special sphere of influence or backyard in Africa (Whiteman, 1997, p. 92; Bovcon, 2013, p. 6).

EU Member States preferred to launch independent military operations (a bridging or a stand-by operation) rather than directly participating in the UN-led peace operations. This preference revealed the fact that EU's institutional interests, including promoting the EU's profile and prestige as a globally acting foreign and security policy actor and mitigating negative effects of some internal crisis, have been pursued under the guise of helping the UN in maintaining international peace and security. Thus, true or foremost motivation of EU Member States for launching the operations and the modality of these operations undermined their moral legitimacy, because it casted doubts on whether these operations have served the global common good through helping the UN in maintaining international peace and security.

Moreover, EU's utilitarian, selective and self-interested use of its crisis management tool puts limit on the EU's future reliability and taken-for-grantedness as a UN partner in protecting and promoting international peace and security, and thus resulted in cognitive legitimacy deficit. The EU's failure to launch a bridging operation in the eastern DRC in 2008-2009 despite UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's request from the EU to launch a bridging operation just like Artemis until MONUC facing a severe military and humanitarian crisis at that time would be reinforced is a significant example of the EU's utilitarian, selective and self-interested use of its crisis management tool. Owing to the reluctance of some EU Member States, particularly the UK, Germany and France, the EU failed to send a bridging force to the eastern DRC for helping the UN stabilize the situation (Gowan, 2011). This example brings into question the EU's future reliability and taken-for-grantedness as a UN partner in protecting and promoting international peace and security particularly in cases where EU's institutional interests or member states' individual interests are not at stake. This has an undermining effect on cognitive legitimacy of EU's crisis management tool.

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