EU'S Capacity of Creating Desirable Outcomes: Cyprus, Georgia, Central Asia, and Some Other Matters of Normative Leadership

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Abstract
This paper seeks to explore the normativeness of the EU by judging its capacity of creating desirable outcomes through its foreign-policy implementation process. From the 1990s on, the EU has become more visible in global politics as a unique, non-traditional actor using its norms and values as a deliberative force. Nevertheless, its conflict-management patterns, conduct of foreign affairs beyond its neighbourhood, participation in the sustainable-development efforts, fight against the climate change, and attitude towards the global financial crisis have all displayed that the EU is, in fact, not at ease in creating desirable outcomes subsequent to its foreign-policy actions. The failure of the Annan Plan in Cyprus is one of the quintessential examples of the EU's consequence-challenged foreign politics. This paper intends to probe the Cyprus question from the perspective of the EU's normative leadership. Georgia, Central Asia, the Doha Round, climate change, and the global financial crisis are among the topics that will be enquired into here in a similar light.
Keywords: Normative leadership, EU's actorness, Cyprus, Georgia, Central Asia, Doha Round

Özet
Bu makale, AB'nin dış politika uygulama süreci çerçevesinde istenilen sonuçları yaratabilme kapasitesini ve buna bağlı olarak normatifliğini sorgulamayı amaçlamaktadır. 1990lardan itibaren AB, yaptırım gücü olarak norm ve değerlerini kullanan benzersiz ve geleneksel olmayan bir aktör olarak küresel politikada giderek daha görünür oldu. Ancak, çatışma çözme yöntemleri, komşuluk bölgesinin dışında uyguladığı politikalar, sürüdürülebilir kalkınma çabalarına katkısı, iklim değişikliği ile mücadelesi ve küresel finansal kriz karşısındaki duruşu, AB'nin dış politika uygulamalarında istediği sonuçları almakta aslında zorlandığını göstermektedir. Annan Planı'nın Kıbrıs'ta başarısızlığa uğraması, AB'nin tecrübe ettiği bu güçlüğün en tipik göstergelerinden biridir. Bu makale, Kıbrıs sorununa AB'nin normatif liderliği perspektifinden bakmayı amaçlamaktadır. Kıbrıs ile birlikte Gürcistan, Orta

Asya, Doha Turu, iklim değişikliği ve küresel finansal kriz konuları da burada bu bakış açısı ile ele alınmaktadır.
Anahtar Kelimeler: Normatif liderlik, AB'nin aktörlüğü, Kıbrıs, Gürcistan, Orta Asya, Doha Turu

Introduction

Honouring its founding fathers, the EU has developed an integration policy to foster peace and prosperity within and beyond its borders. It has championed a unique integration model without resemblance in contemporary global politics. Following the dissolution of the Soviet bloc, the EU has forcefully come to the fore as an actor claiming normativeness and a more visible international presence. The thick set of laws, norms, and values enshrined in the *acquis communautaire* has become the features of a European identity in the making. The institutional and discursive framework created by the intergovernmental EU Council and the supranational European Commission in the course of time has served as the backbone of this Europeaness, which is normatively defined through free trade, good governance, democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights. Having celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, the EU, still a young contender for the world's normative power, has been progressively constructing a deliberative force grounded in peaceful governance and commitment to European norms and values.

In the design of its foreign policy in general and enlargement and neighbourhood policies in particular, the EU has established the compliance with its norms and values as the prerequisite for the further enhancement of its external relations. Also, as its foremost conflict-management, peace-promotion, and negotiating tool, the EU has grown a norm-based existence, and has hence distinguished itself from the other global actors such as the US. In this sense, it has been viewed by some scholars as "a new form of international actor, which has defied categorization."[1] This article, however, will argue that the EU's normativeness is confined to rhetoric only and is a self-image, which isn't commensurate with the external perceptions of the EU. The lack of military initiative in the Union's *raison d'être* doesn't necessarily vindicate its self-image as a global normative power.

Empirical observations on the EU's norm-based foreign-policy implementations reveal proofs of considerable incapability. In this study, the incapability is understood as the vague, unsure attitude towards the

problematic foreign-policy issues, which prevent the EU from arriving at the desired outcomes. The world public has witnessed countless times that the intended consequences stipulated in the Union's official *papiers* have not been reached subsequent to a foreign-policy (in)action. What is striking, following the failure of producing an envisaged consequence at the end of a foreign-policy (in)action, is that the EU has not assumed responsibility for failure in the way that a normative power ought to. Skilful in dressing its Teflon armour immediately after its solution plan proposed for an international conflict has been removed from the agenda of the international community, no such failure sticks on the EU. And the member states do not feel the urge to debate the reasons of failure in depth.

In discussing the effectiveness of the Union's foreign-policy implementation process, its consequence-challenged presence in the global politics, which casts shadow over its normativeness, requires to be elaborated upon. Within this context, the Cyprus question begs to be revisited from the consequentialist perspective extended to the EU's foreign-policy mechanisms. If after each failure, the member-states, institutions and the officials of the EU do not reconsider and reformulate the efficiency and appropriateness of their policy instruments, the EU could not build normative capacity and improve its perceptions by the third parties. In the aftermath of the collapse of the Annan proposal, the EU spectacularly avoided reassessing its stance on the current situation in Cyprus. Similarly, a close-up view of the EU's dealings with Georgia and Central Asia from a consequentialist perspective is essential in order to arrive at a better comprehension of the European normative power. The EU's international presence in the Doha Round and its responses to the climate change and global financial crisis would also contribute to this inquiry.

The Normativeness of the EU

When Ian Manners coined the term "normative power" to define the EU's *raison d'être* in 2002, the Union had increasingly come to be perceived as the incarnation of the normative ethics in the international system.[2] In its attempt to provide an ethical and normative framework through its *acquis communitaire* and institutionalism, the EU has aspired a soft leadership on the global level stemming from the power of its norms and values and not from the hard power of a military existence. Although, given the EU's

recent militarization attempts in the name of overhauling its Common Foreign and Security Policy, Manners has revisited his contention of calling the EU a normative power in 2006, discussions over the normative attributes of the EU have already permeated the intellectual agenda. [3] In one of his sequential articles, Manners grounds the EU's normative power in its success in changing "the norms, standards and prescriptions of world politics away from the bounded expectations of state-centrity." In this way, it has altered, for the better, "what passes for 'normal' in world politics."[4] In celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, the EU and its ability to transform the existing conceptions of normal deserve considerable praise.

The normative leadership of the EU, however, is an argument that still requires substantial validation. European normativeness, at the outset, presented itself as the antithesis of American foreign policy and a unique feature of the EU. Nevertheless, as Helen Sjursen, a very harsh critic of arguments for the EU's normativeness, emphasizes, US foreign policy too bears "normative undertones" and "a particular focus on human rights and democratic principles."[5] The EU's compensation of its lack of military clout with the binding force of norms and values has also been highlighted as a significant tenet of its normative power. The EU's Security Strategy of 2003 in which the future challenges to the European security were spelled out, is a document testifying to the member-states' will not to resort hastily to military options in its conflict-prevention and –solution mechanisms.[6] The EU Council holds that the contemporary security threats are not necessarily militaristic in character. Furthermore, the EU's superior hand in setting international trade regulations, the conditionality principle conducting the relations with the candidate states, and its financial assistance mechanism to support good governance in newly democratic states serve as better pre-emptive instruments than military force. Nevertheless, Sjursen contests this aspect of the normative EU as well by suggesting that "the use of non-military instruments cannot on its own be enough to identify a polity as a 'normative' power," as "economic sanctions," for instance, "can [too] cause serious harm."[7]

In his attempts at understanding and describing the normative attributes of the EU, Manners explicates the sustainability of normativeness with the perceptions the actors "who practice and experience it."[8] If normative power is not recognised by it subjects as normative, such power suffers irreconcilable legitimacy problems. The action taken by a normative power, according to the definition provided

by Esther Barbé and Elisabeth Johansson-Nognés, will be "essentially subjective, relational and open to interpretations."[9] Normativeness necessitates external approval, either universal or regional. In the absence of such recognition, normativeness is delimited to a self-image and could not be treated as an established fact. And in the discipline of European studies, the EU's normative role has remained highly disputable and, furthermore, has not been wholeheartedly shared by the candidate and neighbouring states –not to mention the underdeveloped world represented in the World Trade Organisation.[10] The scope of the discussions over the European normativeness evidently exceeds the limits of this study. Therefore, within the broad area of insights into differing normative capacities, it is essential to concentrate on what is relevant to this article.

This article seeks to elaborate on two inherent weaknesses of an international actor's normative aspirations and thus to enquire how normative the EU's present foreign policy is. The first feature to be taken into account in this inquiry is the inevitable challenge posed to the norm-based foreign policy implementations by the primordial priority to guard the national, and in the case of the EU, both national and supranational, interests. With such a flaw embedded in the normative-power theories, an actor in international relations with normative aspirations will eventually fall into, what Thomas Diez calls, the "norms versus interest" trap.[11] The second inherent weakness that the normative actor would need to surmount is the (in)capability of achieving the desired outcome at the end of the normative action taken. Of course, current international relations lack an ideal observer who would judge the consequences that an action produces. On this account, the judgement of the actors who have been directly affected by the action taken should determine whether that action is right or wrong, normative or not. Drawing on Elizabeth Anscombe's consequentialism, Manners contends that if a consequentialist approach is to be adopted in understanding the EU's normative power, then "analysing the impacts of EU actions and their implications for others" will be imperative.[12] Without dwelling on the consequentialist ethics, which has extreme and ambitious interpretations underpinning the truism the "end justifies means," this study argues that the failure of attaining the intended consequences contributes to the normative quality of an action.

In the absence of an ideal observer, the outcomes of the EU's foreign-policy (in)actions are judged by the actors subjected to them. In their widely cited work *The European Union as a Global Actor*, Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler hold that the EU's actorness could be perceived through three elements: opportunity, presence, and capability. Opportunity stands for the necessity that requires a foreign-policy action. Presence denotes the will of an actor to take an action to influence the geography beyond its jurisdictional area. Finally, capability refers to "the ability to exploit opportunity and capitalise on presence."[13] In the case of the EU's actorness, the capability element has not been fully reinforced, as the EU's foreign-policy actions encounter both the 'norm vs. interest' dilemma and a grave deficiency of facilitating intended results. The EU's problematic capability as a global actor inevitably exerts a negative influence on how it is perceived by others. In this respect, it wouldn't be wrong to suggest that its external perception as an uncertain and unreliable actor doesn't coincide with the EU's self-image as a normative power.

In the coming sections, the EU's foreign-policy (in)actions towards some notoriously problematic issues such as Cyprus, Georgia, the Doha Round, climate change, and the financial crisis will be probed into. Having tested the EU's conflict-management and norm-promotion skills, these currently unresolved issues shake the ground on which the EU aspires for normative actorness. Additionally, its Central Asia strategy is the quintessential example of the tension between norms and interests, which presents considerable challenges to the EU in creating a stable, accountable foreign policy. On this account, Central Asia should also be included in this inquiry of the EU's (in)capability of attaining the desired outcomes beyond its borders. Of course, the way that Mathias Albert and his friends define the EU as "no single, unified actor," but rather "a set of actors…and an institutional and discursive frame"[14] provides an explanation for why the EU's foreign policy falters from a consequence-oriented perspective. Nevertheless, since the EU's official papers insist on its global actorness and readiness "to share responsibility for global security,"[15] such faltering can't go unnoticed.

A Reluctant Normative Power: EU and the Cyprus Question

Manners contends that "[t]he ethics of the EU's normative power" is enshrined in its "ability to normalize a more just, cosmopolitical world."

Grounding his argument of cosmopolitics in the comprehensive discussions of Pheng Cheah and Bruce Robbins, Manners embraces the definition of cosmopolitics as the moral force "empowering people in the actual conditions of their lives."[16] Once such understanding of cosmopolitics has been recognized as a valid criterion to evaluate the normative capability of the EU, it is essential to take it into account in the probes about the EU's normative-policy implementation habits and their outcomes. From this perspective, if an EU policy fails to bear the consequence of empowering people and bettering the socio-economic and political conditions in which they live, such failure gives one the reason to question the global actorness of the EU and its cosmopolitan capability. At this point, the Cyprus question comes to the fore as a relevant topic that explicates more about the current potential of the European cosmopolitics.

There is no doubt that the role of the EU in the Cyprus question has been widely treated by many able hands. Nevertheless, as the problem persists, it has not yet been a subject definitively exhausted. It has appeared and reappears repeatedly within the context of the EU's enlargement policies, conflict-management abilities, and, of course, of its normative actorness. Evidently, this article does not aim to recap the interminable history of the Cyprus conflict or to provide a content analysis of the exceptionally large literature on the problem. It rather seeks to pin down the normative consequences of the Greek Cypriot government's adhesion to the EU as the Republic of Cyprus with particular reference to the Annan Plan. When the Union offered the membership prospect to the Greek Cypriot administration, EU officials, experts and academics seemed to be convinced that the membership negotiations would indeed have, what Diez called, "a catalytic effect on the Cyprus conflict," which would accelerate a working and permanent solution on the island.[17] Nonetheless, the expectations towards the EU's catalytic role in this frozen conflict have, till today, remained unfulfilled and the envisaged consequences have not been achieved. This article is concerned with the point that the way in which the EU has dealt with Cyprus, in terms of the outcomes of the actions taken, is underwhelming.

Since the opening of the membership negotiations with Cyprus in March 1998, the EU has pursued a process in which it divorced its role as an outsider and reconstructed its position, despite its contrary claims, as a "part of the conflict."[18] To be more exact, it has assumed a dual role both

as a neutral mediator and a partial entity guarding the interest of its members, Greece and the Greek Cypriot government. Given the awkwardness of the situation and its inherent incapability of facilitating desirable outcomes, the EU has taken part in the conflict as at once an enthusiastic and a hesitant, reluctant actor, which took one step forward and two steps back. Furthermore, to a certain degree, this unclear attitude has contributed to the perpetuation of the problem. As held by Mathias Albert, Thomas Diez and Stephen Stetter, in the cases of frozen conflicts, the integration process could in fact trigger "the effect of intensifying conflict discourse."[19] In the aftermath of the Annan-Plan referenda in Cyprus, such intensification on discursive level resurfaced alongside the spectacular disappointment of those who invested their hopes in a EU-promoted solution. As Mustafa Türkeş puts it, the involvement of the EU in the Cyprus question has not solved the problem, but rather transformed it –and not yet for the better.[20]

European integration was expected to bridge the Greek and Turkish parties of the Cyprus conflict through "the legal and normative framework of the EU," which would work to "delegitimize previously dominant positions."[21] It is true that the EU membership prospect has shifted the ground on which the conflicting parties stood and that some positions have been reposited. Nevertheless, the transformation in motion set by the EU has not touched equally the lives of all peoples concerned by the current situation on the island. In other words, adopting the language of cosmopolitics, the EU, since its involvement in the question through its support of the Annan Plan, has been incapable of empowering the Turkish Cypriots in their actual lives. What has grown to be integral to the EU's ethos, "the neofunctionalist logic of a reorientation of daily practices towards a new centre through the integration process" has not been extended to Northern Cyprus. The estimated consequence of the planned action, therefore, has fallen short of the requisite of "bringing people together" and "transforming their daily lives." [22] The financial aid and technological assistance to rehabilitate the infrastructure and better the waste management has not sufficed for such transformation.

In its dealings with Cyprus, the EU always underlines "its embeddedness in the UN discourse,"[23] hence its obligation to act within the framework drawn by the UN. What is more, the Union seeks to justify its position as an impartial outsider to the Cyprus question by particularly relying on these claims. However, from the moment the EU offered full

membership to the Greek Cypriots to represent Cyprus as the legitimate government and included them in its decision-making process with a veto right, it has internalised the problem and become partial by definition. The EU's self-assumption about still being an outside actor is misplaced, as it is "not shared by Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot officials."[24] Since the commencement of its accession process, the Greek Cypriot administration, allied with Greece, has campaigned for "a European solution"[25] and hindered any attempt by any other member state to empower the people of Northern Cyprus in their actual lives. Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots have been thus reduced to a lesser, unequal status among the conflicting parties.

When the Turkish Cypriot administration, with the encouragement of the AKP government of Turkey, opened their frontiers in 2003 and let Greek Cypriots step into the territories under its jurisdiction, this move was considered as a turning point in the Cyprus impasse and the solid proof of the positive influence of Europeanization in the foreign policy of Turkey, a candidate country.[26] Though still a baby step, it also demonstrated the Turkish Cypriots' will to accelerate its move towards a political solution. It was a quintessential example of the non-member states' attempt to adjust their current foreign-policy implementations according to the European policies and norms. Such attempts were even further encouraged by the Greek Cypriots' lifting of the restrictions on the mobility of Turkish Cypriots across the island. As a sequence to these developments over Cyprus on the eve of the EU's fifth enlargement, Brussels put the UN's Annan Plan to referendum on both sides of the island on 24 April 2004, just days before Cyprus joined the Union. When the plan was rejected by 76 percent of Greek Cypriots and accepted by 64 percent of Turkish Cypriots, the EU's dream of admitting in a unified island, in an open Democracy commentator's words, "hit the rocks of political reality."[27] Of course, right from the outset, the Cyprus question has not followed a smooth path and the EU in April 2004 tried its hand at an almost unprecedentedly difficult task. The rejection of the Annan Plan, nonetheless, points to the EU's inherent weakness of achieving the consequences intended and, in many respects, is a failure, which should have implications for the normativeness of the EU.

Despite the overtly expressed disappointment of the EU's then commissioner for enlargement, Gunter Verheugen, who felt "deceived"[28] by the Greek Cypriots' last-minute change of heart and overwhelming

"No" to the Annan Plan, the Greek government of Cyprus was rewarded by full membership within the following couple of days. The fact that the EU did not set the condition of a permanent and coherent solution on the island as a prerequisite of the adhesion of Cyprus and that, instead, it assured the Greek Cypriot leadership of the unconditionality of their candidature definitely contributed to the further entanglement of the already complicated issue. As Hugh Pope, a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group, commented on the doom of the Annan Plan, "Cyprus now has no real carrot to go for a solution and there is no real stick to use against it. There are no brakes on the situation anymore."[29] The EU had to settle for a design in complete defiance of its historical mission of value and norm promotion.

What is striking here is that the EU has never treated the ill fate of the Annan Plan as one of its own shortcomings that restrict the success of its conflict management policy. On the day after the double referenda on the island, it took refuge in its traditional role as an outsider to the problem and restored the Cyprus deadlock back to the UN agenda. As if such failure never existed, it has not been debated within the EU. And this attitude, in the words of Türkeş, is "understandable but not acceptable."[30] Today, the leaders of Greek and Turkish Cypriots bilaterally come together on a regular basis to work out the solution yearned for by all involved parties for decades now. Given the Greek Cypriots' EU membership and the willingness of Turkish Cypriots to rightfully join the Union, one has reason to assume that the tendency to honour European norms, values and institutionalism is decisive in the ongoing negotiations. This aspect of the current situation in Cyprus may be explained by the EU's normative actorness and therefore appreciated. Nevertheless, its hesitancy and delay in empowering Turkish Cypriots in their actual lives, reluctance to step forward as an assertive mediator capable of achieving the intended results, inconsistency in its dealings with the Cyprus question, and, finally, its insistence on deploying the 'trial and error method' as a viable conflict-management instrument challenge the EU's self-image as the global normative power.

Crisis in the Neighbourhood: Georgia's August War with Russia

In a quest for the actorness capability and normative capacity of the EU, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) serves as another apt place to conduct particular scrutiny.[31] Since its official launch in 2004, it has

functioned within a distinctive discursive framework of peace, universal values, good governance, rule of law, mutual benefit, and regional cooperation and, in appearance, remained a decisive attempt to extend this normative discourse to Europe's widely defined periphery. Grounded in the principle of providing European expertise for the 'right' kind of statehood, climate improvement and free trade in the regions that fall out of the reach of the EU's enlargement policy, the ENP has promised stability and cooperation to the partner states, of course, in return for their commitment to the European norm and values. Its norm-promoting capacity in economically backward and politically troubled countries has even been further enhanced, as the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI) replaced in 2007 the EU's two technical and financial assistance programmes: TACIS (Strengthening Environmental Information and Observation Capacity in the Newly Independent States) and MEDA (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership). For the budget period 2007-2013, the ENP countries are allocated an amount of 11 billion euro excluding the financial contributions by the European Investment Bank and some voluntary EU member states.[32]

Through the ENP, the EU has found a means not to alienate 16 neighbouring countries, which, for the time being, are not offered membership prospects. It has engaged with them in mutually rewarding commercial relations and political dialogue that would inspire them to eventually solve the 'frozen' conflicts at hand in a peaceful way. Furthermore, the ENP has exerted a boosting influence on the EU's capability of setting norms far afield and thus underpinned its tendency towards establishing a hegemonic position. Its neighbourhood strategy should have ideally gained Europe leverage in its competition with the US and Russia over dominance in South Caucasia. Nevertheless, the ENP resembles only on paper a subtle or sound hegemonic plan, which could have given hope to those willing to see the EU with a more dominant and assertive role in the international arena. The policy's implementation process has proven that the EU is not yet able to live up to the ambitious targets and missions permeating the official documents issued by the European Commission. Georgia's August war with Russia has unfortunately justified the doubts of those who questioned the EU's reliability as an omnipotent neighbour.

Beside provision of financial and technical assistance, empowerment of a conflict-resolution mechanism through the ENP has been paramount

to the designers of this potentially hegemonic plan. It wouldn't be wrong to say that the ENP area was permeated with frozen conflicts and if the EU succeeded in taking greater part in eliminating some of them before they were defrosted, this tangible interest in "pursuing universal values" might grow the ENP into "a vehicle for the UN Charter's ambition with regard to peace and conflict settlement."[33] Thus, as an alternative to the hard power of the US, the EU would venture to fulfil its interest in spreading good governance, rule of law and civil dialogue as well as securing trade and energy routes through an overt lack of military initiative. Although the soft-power of the EU has engaged in some "ethical action" and demonstrated a "moral stance" [34] in its dealings with Europe's periphery, the ENP has recently proven ineffective in creating substantial political dialogue and preventing military confrontation among Georgia, South Ossetia and Russia. Georgia's four-year participation in the neighbourhood policy has left a bitter taste in the mouth of Georgians and caused considerable disappointment and resentment.

Subsequent to the Rose Revolution in 2003, having promised comprehensive political reform and substantial transformation, Georgia was fully convinced that this new pro-democratic path would lead to the EU membership in the near future. The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement had been in force since 1999 and familiarized Georgia, though in a limited degree, with the dynamics of the European integration. Now, under the leadership of the west-oriented, revolution hero Mikhail Saakashvili, Georgian statecraft had more reasons than ever to expect from the EU a better offer no less than membership prospect. Nevertheless, to their great disappointment in June 2004, eight months after the revolution, the EU classified Georgia as a 'neighbour' together with Armenia and Azerbaijan by excluding it from the current enlargement agenda. Still, Georgia didn't cease looking up to the EU, and the US of course, for its welfare, prosperity and security. The appointment of the former Minister of Defence, Giorgi Baramidze, as the Vice-Prime Minister and State Minister for Euro-Atlantic Integration in December 2004 was one of many indicators of Georgia's inclination towards the West. Particularly, the point suggesting that the relations with the EU may still result in full membership grew to be a rhetorical strategy frequently used in domestic political discourse in Georgia.

For the sake of the ideal of the EU, the post-revolution government of Georgia risked antagonizing an economically aggressive and politically domineering Russia, which is geographically a much closer neighbour than the EU. On that account, Georgia expected to hear from Europe more assertive and concrete strategies that would help it resist the overwhelming influence of Russia in the region. To be included in the EU's general system of preferences for trade, food security programme, civil society dialogue or budgetary reform initiatives fell short of Georgia's imperative requirement for a "substantial, immediate and politically oriented support"[35] that would peacefully extinguish the separatist movements active in its territory. The EU has expressly maintained distance from the tough questions related to Georgia's territorial sovereignty.

In 2005, a working paper published in Britain aptly asked the question whether the EU's neighbourhood policy could deliver Georgia.[36] Georgia joined the ENP with the baggage of frozen conflicts with South Ossetia and Abkhazia and hoped that the EU, through the dynamics of its neighbourhood policy, would eventually offer meaningful guidance "putting pressure on Russia to encourage its proxies to negotiate constructively."[37] In origin, the ENP has been devised to enhance the EU's capacity as a global actor exerting sound influence beyond its borders. The conflicting situations in Georgia, in effect, represented a great opportunity for the EU to test its 'neighbourly' hegemonic powers. The problematic independence claims of South Ossetia and Abkhazia have troubled Georgia since the fall of the Soviet Union, and the Rose Revolution of 2003 marked a turning point in terms of the accelerating importance of the EU alongside the US in the resolution of the conflicts. As Georgia became the key actor in the transit energy route from the Caucasus to Europe, the Saakashvili government came to believe firmly in the indispensability of Georgia for the EU. In its historical presidential statement of November 11, 2003 the EU claimed to be "a global actor possessing the instruments and ability to improve the lives of people beyond the borders of Europe."[38] Against this background, in its rivalry with Russia over the unresolved separatist conflicts in its own territory, Georgia relied on the EU's global-power attributes, which, however, hadn't been tested beyond rhetoric.

The way the EU handled Georgia's August war - to the justification of the Eurosceptics, who doubt the EU's skills of conducting a distinct

and efficient foreign policy- displayed the immaturity and inaccurateness of its regional and global leadership discourse. From the outset of the Georgian crisis, instead of demonstrating a strong will in order to resolve conflicts, the EU rather pursued a "timid 'Russia-first' policy" [39] at the expence of Georgia and jeopardised the future of the ENP by its own hands. Inspired by the long-distance prospect of EU candidacy, in January 2005 Saakashvili concluded his plans of peace to be presented to the Council of Europe and consented to Moscow's attempts at granting citizenship to the residents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and accepted the dual citizenship as a *fait accompli*.[40] As an indication of encouragement, Tbilisi in return expected to be included in the EU's visa-facilitation list. Nevertheless, in late 2006, the EU completed a visa-facilitation agreement not with Georgia but in fact with Russia. Having done that, the EU – as expressed by the Georgian ambassador to the EU- further complicated an already very sensitive situation and not in favour of Georgia. Contrary to the essence of the ENP, the EU undermined the efforts of Georgia to keep its relations with South Ossetia, Abkhazia and, of course, Russia in balance as well as to "consolidate the incipient democratization in process."[41]

The outburst of the South-Ossetia separatist movement, Georgian intervention, and Russia's military actions in Georgia in August 2008 have displayed that unlike the discursive suggestions of Europe's capability "to project notions of peaceful coexistence into previously conflict-ridden territories within and beyond its borders,"[42] the EU was not yet the normative power that it claimed to be. In the article published in *Speigel*, the former Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers and his friends argue that "the explosive situation" in Georgia "can not be resolved without a coherent policy response from the European Union." The ENP should have served as a preventive mechanism communicating European norms and values to the conflicting parties. Europe, however, refrained from interfering "much earlier as a mediator" and "this was a serious mistake."[43] In its attempts at creating a coherent foreign policy, the EU still functions on the principle of "trial and error" and unlike the argument put forward by the article entitled 'In Defence of Europe,' this fact does not make it a "pioneer actor" or "one of the most formidable machines for managing differences peacefully ever invented."[44] In order to go beyond its very impressive rhetoric of 'force of good,' the EU should learn, for the sake of its neighbours, to be able to act on the right

strategy once and for all, without waiting first for the bitter lessons of failure to guide the policy-making process. The Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos, for example, could have urged the EU, prior to the August war, to conclude "certain practical steps of visa facilitation" and "some free trade relationship" with Georgia, but more importantly to give this neighbouring country "a political signal" promising this time the stable support of the EU.[45]

Another Soft-Power Dilemma: EU's Central Asia Strategy

In addition to its painful and equally disappointing dealings with Georgia, the EU's Central Asia Strategy is definitely another test case that would measure the EU's ever-questionable capability of pursuing a soft-power leadership. In discussing how effective the EU's efforts of norm promotion are, or could be, its relations with the five republics of Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, appear to be highly determining. Cornered by its excessive reliance on the world's 'undemocratic' energy sources, the EU prefers to act rather as a trade partner and hence mutes the assertive voice within supposed to set the European values as the prerequisite of its more friendly existence in the region.

In terms of further cooperation in energy supply and trade, as the meeting between the EU troika and the foreign ministers of these five states in Ashgabat on 9-10 April 2008 showed, a rapprochement between the two geographies, connected through pipelines, has been happening for some time. In compliance with the EU's quest for new energy transport routes, energy-saving and energy-efficient projects as well as for renewable energy resources, the Central Asia generously offers various prospects of partnership and opportunities, including the Trans-Caspian corridor. Being fully aware of these prospects, the EU, since the independence of these republics, has allocated moderate but mounting financial assistance that has today reached the amount of 1,4 billion euros. Furthermore, as Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU's Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, frequently highlights, in the budget period 2007-2013, the EU has earmarked a total of 750 million euros to be used in Central Asia related matters.[46] Within these enhancing liaisons, the energy dialogue, as the EU interminably seeks to secure its energy supply and reduce its very visible dependence on Russia, seems to be given the ultimate priority.

Nevertheless, the soft-power aspiration of the EU requires a more complex interaction between two parties to facilitate progress in terms of rule of law, democratization, good governance, and education. Despite its inherent commitment to these values, Brussels has appeared rather slow to reinforce an action plan to attend to these priorities. Having so far managed its Central Asia policy through one-facet approach of energy interests, the EU has deliberately and conveniently postponed its norm-promoting, reform-facilitating role. European public opinion, on the other hand, is very aware of this neglect and through the NGOs and press; it aims to influence the European Commission's dealings with the Caucasia in favour of a norm-oriented attitude.[47]

The Central Asia Strategy, relaunched in Ashgabat on 14-15 May 2008, reveals one of many dilemmas embedded in the functioning of the EU foreign policy. As Diez puts, in the mission of creating and promoting norms to guide the international affairs, a clash between the norms and interests will be inevitable at some point.[48] When the norm promoter in the international arena faces the dilemma of choosing between its economic, political or geostrategic interest and the norm to be promoted and when the norm in question jeopardizes the interest in question, the norm promoter's capacity of surmounting such dilemma should determine its capability as a soft power. In the cases of disentangled norms and interests, the EU has not always adopted an uncompromising stance constantly enhancing its civilian and normative power, fostering human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The shifting position of the EU causes neighbour states, NGOs and scholars to question the EU's sincerity and capability as a soft power. Despite the EU officials' claim to be learning from mistakes, rather than following an unfolding great strategy, in terms of skilfully conducting its foreign affairs, the EU has been facing what Christopher Hill underlined fifteen years ago as the "capability expectation gap."[49] When the policy area to attend to is the energy-supply security and the counterparts are the once 'newly independent' republics of Central Asia, the EU deliberately fails to highlight its civilian-power discourse and appears mostly as an energy partner acting solely on its own interests. In that sense, it appears almost trivial whether the EU has fulfilled the capability expectation of its own public or not. Such pragmatic attitude, undoubtedly, exerts a damaging influence on the soft- power aspirations.

As German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeir said last year, on the occasion of the introduction of the EU's new Central Asia Strategy, "countries such as Russia, China, Japan, Turkey and the US are very present there" and, inevitably, there is an urgent need for "some catching up to do in Europe" on the matter.[50] Therefore, the EU encounters a very serious competition in Central Asia, which attributes priority to the economic and security interests at the expense of promoting the European values and principles of good governance. It is clear that the competitive environment dominated mainly by Russia, Turkey and the US prevents the EU from insisting on the socio-political transformation of the Central Asian republics as the prerequisite of further economic and security cooperation.

It is evident here that a firm, uncompromising attitude similar to that adopted in face of the candidate and some neighbouring states is simply not affordable in such conditions. Furthermore, if the norm promotion put at the front as prerequisite in the progress of the relations with the Central Asian republics, the assertive tone constantly reminding of the lack of reforms in the arrays of democracy, human rights and the rule of law would in effect strengthen in the region the hands of Russia and Turkey, which already enjoy significantly much tighter interaction with the five republics due to their geographical, cultural and historical proximity. The EU takes expressly cautious steps for not losing ground to other states in the crowded rivalry over Central Asia.

The shifting position of the EU in playing the norm promoter has not gone unnoticed by the NGOs in Europe and a strong opposition appealing for an uncompromised commitment towards the enhancement of the civil society equally in every candidate, associate or partner state has emerged. Among the most fervent participators of this opposition, the Human Rights Watch criticizes the EU on the grounds that "a credibility gap exists between words and deeds." It is no longer possible to conceal the fact that the member states have "no room for manoeuvre because of their energy dependency" in their dealings with Russia and Central Asia and the soft-power prestige of the EU erodes considerably because of this – and not a little– flaw.[51] Of course, expecting a monolithic attitude towards all 130 states, which the EU has established relations with is not realistic. Nevertheless, consistency while conducting foreign affairs and claiming soft but still a hegemonic power is essential and the EU receives much

criticism on its inconsistency and insufficiency with its good governance-building incentive, especially from the civil actors within.

The meeting between the EU-3, Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner, then current EU president Slovenia and coming president France, and five of the Central Asian republics on 9-10 April 2008, as a matter of fact, aimed at a renovated, intensified dialogue to serve both the overhaul of the soft-power credibility of the EU and the broadening of the cooperation areas designated between the two parties. The new dialogue suggests a tighter interaction in the spheres of politics, economics, environmental protection, education, poverty reduction and law as well as security and energy. It also envisages comprehensive plans for personnel training, human resources development and, of course, civil-society building. This meeting was the third time that the EU and the Central Asian states came together at the level of foreign ministers and it was the first time that a will was exhibited more strongly than ever on both sides to take their cooperation and association to another level, beyond just mere projects. A tangible indicator of this new phase of comprehensive cooperation will be the "Europa House," which, as Ferrero-Waldner points, will be built in Ashgabat as a contact point in Central Asia and in accordance with the intensification of the EU existence in the region, full Delegation offices will be opened in all Central Asian states.[52]

Undoubtedly, all these attempts by the EU Council and Commission are designed to foster a new relationship with the Central Asian states essentially grounded in norm promotion and thus to respond well to the criticisms of the European civil society. Ferrero-Waldner's words spelled out after the 9/10 April meeting saying "human rights are, indeed, a very important part for us in our external relations, and therefore we really want to see an even better commitment" are significant in that sense.[53] Re-emphasising its soft-power mission, the EU seeks to join the international competition over the Central Asia as a hegemon promising stability, good governance and democratization and asking further integration of transport and energy networks and common actions strengthening border management and drug trafficking control in return.

Nevertheless, norm-promotion in foreign realms does not always yield desired outcomes. Whereas other actors compete for dominance in the region without setting prerequisites such as painful and comprehensive political transformation in their offers of security and trade, the EU carries around its neck a very heavy burden of norms,

which makes the European promise at times very repulsive and offensive to the partner or associate states. In order to prevent the departure of these states from its sphere, the EU has also begun to adjust its soft-power discourse in the way to elaborate that the partnership and association programmes will be more carefully "tailored to the specific needs of each country"[54] and that they will not always prescribe one rigid set of unchanging norms. And in the case of Central Asian states, as Ferrero-Waldner puts, the EU is now more "aware of different historical and cultural contexts" there and will act accordingly.[55] Still, even such compromise from the norm-promoting stance unleashes criticism and accusations of double standard within the EU.

All in all, the EU has not yet overcome the 'capability expectation gap' that becomes shamefully visible in its foreign affairs and the Central Asia is especially an apt test case to observe such gap. Although the expectation from the EU to sustain the rule of law, democratization and good governance in its neighbourhood and beyond, through comprehensive cooperation and multilateral partnership treaties are high, its capability in doing that is, in reality, restrained by its need for energy. As long as the EU states' inconceivable need for energy continues, the EU's soft-power capability will not be realised in its full force. The soft-power capability requires lots of prescriptions of bitter medicine for socio-political and economic transformation most of which may disturb the counterpart governments and put the energy interests of the EU at risk.

A Sample of Other Dilemmas: Doha Round, Climate Change, and Economic Crisis

The EU's normative capacity has not only been tested over its performance of spreading democratization and good governance as well as of eliminating the frozen conflicts within and beyond its borders in a peaceful way. As a global actor, the EU is also required to manifest strong leadership in terms of norm setting in the areas such as global sustainable development, climate change and international financial governance. Participation in the "sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among people, free and fair trade" and undoubtedly the "eradication of poverty" [56] with results of the desired sort will retain its role in determining the normative capacity of the EU. The deadlock of the Doha Round, the attempts within the EU to delay the

climate-change package and the hesitant attitude towards the global financial crisis and the possible scheme to recreate the Bretton Woods institutions point to the acute problem of producing the consequences compatible with the EU's self-assumed moral image.

Evidently, the EU considers the spread and enhancement of its trade regime as a foreign-policy matter. As a working paper by Ulrika Mörth exhibits, through its participation in the WTO the EU aims to pursue four norm-based issues. The first three normative priorities, which are called "the issues of substance," are related with environment protection, health –particularly within the context of intellectual property- and labour rights. The fourth priority of the EU necessitates "good governance in the WTO."[57] Since the WTO's first ministerial conference in 1996 in Singapore, the EU has treated the WTO as an invaluable platform, which bears the potential to realise its normative designs for global trade. In the beginning, the EU provided much support to the three working groups on trade facilitation and investment, competition and on transparency in government procurement, which have all later come to be known as the Singapore issues.[58] Nevertheless, the developing countries received those issues rather unpleasantly as the new instruments of manipulation in the hands of the dominant powers of global politics. Due to the enduring objections from the developing countries, only the trade facilitation of the Singapore issues made its way to the WTO agenda in July 2004. The "tough posture" of the developing countries took the EU member states by surprise.[59]

The failure of the Singapore issues and the subsequent deadlock in the Doha Round draw a clear picture of the developing countries' perceptions of the EU. The developing countries did not consent to incur the cost of compliance to the Singapore issues, because the EU's self-image of normative power is not commensurate with the developing countries' image of the EU within the context of the WTO negotiations. The EU's meticulous efforts to keep the health and environment issues on the negotiating table and to prevent the draft regulations from including agriculture and fisheries have justified the suspicion of the non-western world that the EU is simply "a market-driven technocratic organisation" in the disguise of a normative power.[60] New regulations on health and environment that the EU is a champion for would, on one hand, impose heavy financial burden on the restricted budgets in the developing world. The inclusion of fishery and agriculture in the trade regime of the WTO

that the EU aims to prevent, on the other hand, will open the European markets more freely to the rest of the world and increase the competition power of the developing countries in their own markets.

It shouldn't be surprising therefore that the EU faces serious legitimacy problems in the WTO. Despite the role it has assumed as a normative actor, the Union's impression perceived by the non-member, external states depicts an interest pursuer, who aims at avoiding the further liberalisation of the agricultural trade at the expense of the developing world. Against this background, the success of the current trade-negotiation round of the WTO, the Doha Round would not have been a realistic expectation. The most recent round of negotiations, which were conducted in the axis of liberalisation versus protectionism, froze on July 23-29 2008. The talks suffered a considerable lack of trust between the negotiating parties and failed, in the end, to resolve the impasse over agriculture, industrial tariffs, non-tariff barriers, and service and trade remedies. The claims of Peter Mandelson, the former EU Commissioner for Trade, arguing that the EU has "never sought to be paid for reform of [the EU's] farm subsidies in Europe by receiving market access in developing country farm markets,"[61] have not exerted any influence on non-European countries.

The Doha Round is another quintessential example demonstrating the gap between the EU's self-image as normative power and its external contesting perceptions. The stalled talks over lowering trade barriers in the Doha Round could have helped the EU empower the world's poor people in the actual conditions of their lives and thus vindicated its own normativeness. Nevertheless, the opposition of several individual EU member-states to the WTO negotiations, such as that of France, have degraded the image that the EU Commission has taken pains to develop. France's opposition towards the EU's concessions on farm subsidies has prevented the EU Commission from stretching its position further for the developing world. Also, equally important, under the roof of the WTO, the EU has not yet received the adequate support from the US to comfort their poor partners and improve their understandings of the western world. In the eyes of the developing countries, the EU and US inevitably partake in the image of a monolithic west.

On the eve of the historical G20 Summit of November 15, the EU and US initiated new attempts to rekindle the Doha Round negotiations. They may eventually arrive at a consensus with India, Brazil, China and

African countries in favour of global sustainable development. Nevertheless, the current stalemate in the Doha Round stands for another tangible proof that the EU's normativeness has not been shared by the rest of the world and that the 'norm versus interest' dilemma still appears to be an effective force in determining the foreign-policy action of any actor aspiring to be normative. Although Mandelson's words saying "we worked for success; we had failure pushed on us"[62] beg appreciation in the EU's own right, the impasse of the Doha Round constitute no less a failure. The EU's participation in the fight against climate change, another pressing normative concern, should be understood in a similar light.

As the countdown has begun to the World Climate Change Summit to take place in Copenhagen in December 2009 in which a successor agreement to the Kyoto Protocol will be decided, a certain amount of unease surrounds the EU's officials who interminably work to arrive at a consensus on one coherent European climate policy. By virtue of presiding over the EU Council until 1 January 2009, France has assumed the leading role in bringing member states and their contesting viewpoints in line. The opposition from Italy and Poland to the proposed version of climate and energy package has been seemingly overcome only after the negotiated text was obscured by "vague wording" particularly over the topic of energy-intensive industries.[63] Having taken its role and responsibility in the fight against the climate change very seriously, the EU put into force the Greenhouse Gas Emission Trading Scheme in 2005 to set green regulations for the energy-intensive sectors and monitor them. Given the insensitive attitude of the Bush administration to climate change, the task to establish global climate governance grounded in firm norms, values, and rules fell upon the Brussels to a great extent. The undertaking of such scheme should undoubtedly be considered to be in support of the EU's claim as a normative force in compliance with the UN's Kyoto Protocol.

The implementation process of the emission trade regulations, nevertheless, ended in some unwanted results across the EU. The failure of collecting accurate "emissions-tracking data" and the member states' individual protectionist policies designed "to shelter their industries from real cuts" caused the EU to set "an artificially high baseline pollution level for companies," which was, in fact, a consequence exactly opposite to the desired one. [64] Thus, the EU could not meet the previously

designated levels of carbon-emission reduction and in the end, some chapters of the EU's climate policy has once again fallen into the 'capability gap.' The EU's normative capacity has been from the outset restricted by the political economy of energy production and consumption in Europe. Furthermore, as the new government of the US now appears more responsible in involving itself in global problems, Brussels could lose its normative leverage to Washington particularly in terms of climate change.

The member states may eventually iron out their differences in deciding on a coherent, precise climate policy. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that the tension between the executive and legislative branches inherent in the decision-making practices of the EU will always remain as a force influencing the outcomes to depart from the envisaged end. In the particular of the climate change, the member states could seek to arrive at a climate package at the level of the EU Council where unanimity is required. The pursuit of unanimity, as Romano Prodi said in 2002, paved the way to some historical "darkest moments" of the EU.[65] Throughout the EU's integration history, if it hasn't caused a deadlock, it has definitely watered down the conclusion statements to be issued and rendered them indecisive and vague. Yet, even though the EU Council will achieve unanimity in the vote on new climate measurements, with questionable efficiency of course, the European Parliament this time will be placed "in a tricky position," as "little room for manoeuvre" will be left for the MEPs who claim to be heard and strive to involve in this decision-making.[66] A World Wildlife Fund spokeswoman, who expresses her concerns about the consequences of the European climate debate, warns that the EU is "on the verge of losing an ambitious climate package" and, therefore, of sending "the wrong signal to developing countries."[67]

Another recent complication indicating that the EU's actorness incapability still persists has surfaced in the discussions on how to arrive at an appropriate common European response to the global financial crisis. In the wake of the EU Council Summit held on 15-16 October 2008 in Brussels, the French President Nicolas Sarkozy implied to the French daily *Le Monde* that since the Lisbon Treaty, which enshrines a strong EU presidency is on hold consequent to the Irish referendum, the EU Council should resort to alternative ways in order to compensate for the insufficient executive power, especially at rough times of crisis.[68] To

this end, Sarkozy proposed that France's EU presidency, which was supposed to be over by 01 January 2009, should *de facto* be extended by creating a temporary economic government for a year. France grounds this proposal in the fact that the coming presidents of the EU Council, the Czech Republic and Sweden are not members of the Eurozone and, therefore, are not qualified to lead the Euro states out of the financial storm. When Spain, a member of the Eurozone, takes over the rotating presidency in 2010, France then could terminate this emergency position that is supposed to enable it to serve as acting president.

Although some may see a practical value in this offer, the rest – including the author of this article- consider it as the demonstration of the insufficiency of the EU and its current administrative mechanism to assert a stance on the global level as well as of the inharmonious voices of the member states alienating the option of a consensus in path-changing moments. The prominent member states' reluctance to trust the lesser member states with the presidential tasks could be seen among many factors compromising the Union's integrity and authority as a normative power. Such distrust and incapability clearly cast shadow over efforts to fully enhance the EU's global status. Without hiding their resentment towards the French proposal, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic, Alexandr Vondra bitterly expressed that "if the Eurogroup agrees to be presided by a Frenchman and to meet more frequently, most probably we will not be able to prevent this. However it would not be a wise move but one which would divide EU rather then unify it."[69] Similar huffing and puffing among the member states leave one to only surmise that the EU has heavy baggage critically slowing it down in its march towards the ambitious targets stipulated in its written documents.

In order to compensate the erosion of the image of an efficient global actor, the member states displayed an exceptional unity during their unofficial meeting on 06 November 2008 organised to decide on their position to be defended in the G20 Summit on 15 November 2008 in Washington. Their commitment to submit "rating agencies to registration [and] surveillance," to allow "no market segment, no territory, and no financial institution" escape "regulation or at least oversight" and to give "the IMF the initial responsibility" and "necessary resources" for "recommending the measures to restore confidence and stability" in the global financial market appear to be the common position on which the 27 EU member states have agreed.[70] Nonetheless, the end of the crisis is

not yet to arrive and the measures to be taken will be reached only after long tedious sessions of harsh discussions. To complicate the current situation even further, developing countries are preparing to involve themselves in the negotiations with full force in order to ensure the creation of significantly fairer global financial governance. The task of filing and bending the sharp edges of the arguments and making smooth norms out of them has been a burden, which the EU desires to bear. Guaranteeing the consequences, on the other hand, has not. And against this legacy, the EU will strive to reform the world economic order and survive the financial crisis.

Conclusion

In creating a presence for itself in global politics, the EU has assumed a normative leadership role and deployed a normative deliberative force through its institutional and legislative framework, norms, and values. The normative claims connected to deliberativeness have gained the EU a negotiating advantage in its relations with the candidate, neighbouring, and partner states. Non-traditional and unique in that sense, it singles out itself from other global actors. Nevertheless, the difficulties in achieving a common foreign and security policy as well as landing on the intended outcomes at the end of a foreign-policy action have been compromising the image of normative Europe. On several occasions of global leadership, the sometimes-competing interests of its supranational and intergovernmental institutions, or simply reluctance and hesitancy, have prevented the EU from involving itself in effective actions that could provide permanent solutions to the satisfaction of all parties involved in the problem. A brief overview of its foreign-policy (in)actions would demonstrate that the EU has been at pains to keep up with the consequences envisaged in its official documents or articulated in the *porte-paroles* of EU officials.

The normativeness of a global actor requires external recognition. Otherwise, it remains as a self-image, which is not commensurate with how that actor is perceived in the international arena. The consequence-challenged foreign policy of the EU, also, reduces the European normativeness to a self-image, which is hardly shared by the affected parties. Particularly, before and after the spectacular failure of the Annan Plan in Cyprus, the EU has displayed the attitude of an unsure, hesitant mediator, who is not willing to incur the cost of mediation. The Cyprus

question was a capability test, which ended in the adherence of the Greek Cypriot administration to the EU to represent the entire island to the total disappointment of the Turkish Cypriot community. Although the EU has not assumed any responsibility on the grounds that the UN framework was the only legitimate ground on which the Cyprus negotiations would take place, the double referenda of the Annan Plan were held under the auspices of the EU and the failure of the plan must have had some implications for the EU's actorness. This paper has attempted to reassess the Cyprus question in relation to the discussions over the EU's normative (in)capacity. Consequent to its dealings with Cyprus, the EU has not succeeded in producing the desirable outcomes that would facilitate a comprehensible solution on the island. Evidently, putting the entire blame of the Cyprus impasse on the EU has not been intended here in this article. It has rather ventured to draw attention to the fact that in the post-24 April era, the EU seems not to respond to the moral urge of evaluating how it has contributed to the further complication of the problem, whereas its aim was simply to participate in the solution.

Brussels' hardship in arriving at planned and anticipated consequences recurred in Georgia's August war as well as in the renewal of its Central Asia strategy. The EU's delay in taking efficient foreign-policy actions, ambivalent positions in the face of considerable odds, and its inherent incapacity to surmount the 'norm vs. interest' trap, despite its negotiating advantage over its counterparts through a unique legislative and institutional framework, has constituted an external image for the Union that does not yet suggest a fully-enhanced normative leadership. By the same token, the foreign-policy actions taken to manage the Doha Round, sustainable development, climate change and the global financial crisis have not either underpinned the EU's self-assumed role as a normative power, altruistically bringing solutions to the common problems of mankind by the 'good force' of norms and values.

Manners, the presenter of the idea of normative Europe, also enquires into the capabilities of the EU from the perspective of consequentialism and suggests that if the EU was to be probed according to consequentialist ethics, then its foreign-policy actions would be expected to meet the condition of "doing least harm" in world politics. In this respect, when the outcomes of its foreign-policy actions are taken into consideration, the EU is encouraged to think "reflexively about the impact of its policies on partner countries and regions."[71] As the EU has

begun a new quest for reform in the aftermath of the Irish rejection of the Lisbon Treaty, this could be the time for embracing a more consequence-oriented approach in its common foreign and security policy, which will focus on achieving the right outcomes and empowering people in their actual lives.

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