The European Union and African Border Conflicts: Assessing the Impact of Development Cooperation

Abstract
The EU development cooperation with sub-Saharan African States has progressively taken into account conflict prevention as a cross-cutting issue throughout the last decade. It now constitutes an important element in the EU conflict prevention and resolution policy in Africa. The EC-ACP relationship in particular endows the EU with particular leverage on African States, civil society and regional communities. Despite the particular complexity of African border conflicts, its influence in this respect is quite similar to its impact on closer conflicts through accession and integration processes. The four paths designed by Albert, Diez and Stetter (2003, 2004) can therefore be usefully applied to the EU development cooperation policy and its transformation conflict impact in sub-Saharan-Africa.

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Introduction: the EU capacity for border conflict transformation beyond its immediate periphery

The process of European integration is generally granted with the success of securing long-lasting peace to a war-torn continent profoundly marked by power rivalries and conflicting national identities. The Franco-German reconciliation is in this respect often heralded both as the defining achievement of and the major source of legitimisation for European integration. The successive enlargements have in their turn raised specific border conflict issues, as with the accession of the United Kingdom and Ireland (Northern Ireland), Greece (Greece-Turkey) and the fifth enlargement currently underway (Cyprus, Kaliningrad). These conflicts have been differently dealt with through integration and accession processes. The EU has also been involved in farther conflicts where accession either is (Balkans) or is not (Israel-Palestine) a foreseeable perspective, and where association agreements have been negotiated, as with Albania, Macedonia, Israel or the Palestinian Authority. Lastly, the EU has also adopted positions and taken measures relating to “out-of-area” conflicts, as in Central America (Nicaragua, Panama), Asia (Sri Lanka, East Timor) and above all sub-Saharan Africa.

The EU has not been equally involved in all these conflicts, nor has it used similar instruments in each case. While the European contribution to conflict settlements in most overseas conflicts has been limited to election monitoring and small aid packages earmarked for conflict prevention programs, much more attention and resources were dedicated to internal conflicts and conflicts on its immediate border. Even though sub-Saharan Africa does not belong to the EU immediate periphery, it has witnessed a singular level of EU involvement in conflict resolution and conflict prevention. The EU has been steadily asserting itself as an important conflict perturbator in African border conflicts since the mid-1990s (European Council, 1995; European Commission, 1996). Its conflict transformation capacities in Africa are moreover more similar to its influence on its European periphery than to its conflict prevention policy elsewhere in the world. It has settled a strong development cooperation partnership which has acquired new conflict prevention objectives in the framework of the successive Lomé and Cotonou agreements. The theoretical framework designed by Albert, Diez and Stetter (2003, 2004) can be usefully applied to analyse the EU conflict transformation activities in Africa. The main task of this contribution is therefore to introduce cooperation as a third dimension of the EU border conflict transformation capacity, beyond integration and association.

One of the main obstacles of this paper is the dreadful complexity of African conflicts. To talk merely of African conflicts as a whole, as if there was a definite common pattern to all conflicting situations
in sub-Saharan Africa, is already a gross generalisation. “African conflicts” have moreover inspired innumerable researches and analyses, which it would be useless to try to sum up here. We have therefore left aside predominant economic analyses which focus on the importance of rational interests and natural resources (diamonds, oil, coltan, timber…) to concentrate on the role of borders and identities - already quite an ambitious subject. Vested interests may influence the social construction of cognitive boundaries, but they are themselves often perceived and re-interpreted through the lenses of social conceptions.

The first section of this paper will assess the specificity of African border conflicts. Contrary to a widespread perception, African “ethnic” conflicts are not always violent subordination conflicts and they cannot be understood as a direct outcome of the intersection of primordial cultures and colonial borders. The European responsibility rests in fact probably more with their perception and radicalisation of ethnic differences, which have been further aggravated after the independence by the politicisation of ethnicity and the creation of national identities. Most patterns of conflict are now simultaneously polarised over ethnic boundaries and national borders.

The second section will concentrate on external conflict perturbation and the stakes of de-bordering ethnic and national conflicting identities. Rather than re-drawing territories, a claim rarely made in sub-Saharan Africa, the challenge of conflict transformation lies in the de-bordering of ethnic and national identities. The EU holds a comparative advantage in this respect, particularly over its Member States. Its identity is marked neither by a colonial past nor by post-colonial interferences, which is a determining asset for successful conflict transformation.

The third section analyses in more details the EU conflict prevention policy in sub-Saharan Africa. It uses the framework developed by Albert, Diez and Stetter (2004) to present the different paths through which the EU development cooperation influences African border conflicts. Particular attention will be paid to political conditionality (compulsory impact), the promotion of regional integration (enabling), the diversification of partners to include local and civil society actors (connective impact) and the creation of inclusive political dialogues (constructive impact). Whereas “the European” formerly referred only to the colonial ruler in the eyes of Africans (Balibar, 2001), the EU conflict prevention policy in sub-Saharan Africa allows for another interpretation of the European identity more into line with its own self-perception.
1 - Borders and identities in African border conflicts

This first section identifies the role of ethnic boundaries and national borders in African “ethnic conflicts” and the specificity of European perturbations. We first discuss the influence of European powers in the (re-)construction of ethnic identities, and distinguish between different forms of African “ethnic conflicts”. The next section analyses the role of national borders and identities in the regionalisation of ethnic conflicts.

1.1 - The invention of necessity: European “colonial responsibilities” in African “ethnic conflicts”

Much has been blamed in particular on the drawing of borders inherited from European powers during the colonisation. Borders in Africa would be arbitrary and artificial, delineated by exogenous colonial powers with little knowledge of the local communities, dividing pre-existing and homogeneous ethnic groups and thereby stirring frustrations and conflicts. Primordialist (or essentialist) analysts have accordingly denounced the delimitation of territorial borders and the adoption of the nation-state as the root causes of African conflicts (Davidson, 1992). This widespread perception partly relies on concrete evidence and common sense: some 87% of African borders in 1990 were inherited from colonial times. They were above all the product of continental and even global rivalries among European powers. Only a sixth of colonial borders have taken into account ethnic configurations (Foucher, 1991: 167 and 190) and some 103 international boundaries cut through a total of 131 culture areas (Asiwaju, 1985: 256-9).

Such a position has however been widely contradicted by successive academic researches (Foucher, 1991; Asiwaju and Nugent, 1993). Colonial borders cannot logically be pictured as utterly alien to African local cultures and causing ethnic conflicts altogether. As Paul Nugent puts it: “conventional wisdom has it that they [the borders] were imposed upon unwilling Africans who […] have either suffered dearly from their consequences or merrily continued with life as if they did not exist. These images are contradictory - a point that is seldom noticed” (1993: 35). Further evidence of this is found in the limited number of irredentist and separatist conflicts, which are the two main forms of border conflicts occasioned by the intersection of national borders and homogeneous cultural areas. Michel Foucher only counts 15 boundary disputes in Africa (1991: 196) and much lesser based on an irredentist ideology, with the notable exception of the Somali claim on Italian Somalia (Miles, 1994: 62). Griffiths concludes: “elsewhere in Africa, divided culture groups are generally not the cause of boundary disputes” (1993: 77). The same conclusion applies to separatism, whether within or across a

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2 Borders were drawn essentially according to the geopolitical, economic and administrative interests of the colonial powers, often taken into account at a global scale. The most often cited example is that of the division of the Hausaland, between today’s Niger and Nigeria. The Franco-British treaties of 1904 and 1906 redrew the border in favour of the French side, in exchange for France’s renunciation of fishing rights off the coast of Newfoundland (Miles, 1994: 68).
pre-existing national border. The scarcity of both irredentist and separatist claims demonstrates that the intersection between primordial ethnic boundaries and artificial national borders cannot be held responsible for the wide majority of African conflicts.

What is “ethnic” about African conflicts then? What is “ethnic” if not a primordial cultural content? The picture radically changes if we understand ethnic boundaries not as territorial delineations, but as cognitive dichotomies separating “us” from “them”, as Barth defined them (1969). The determining dimension of ethnicity would not lie in the fixed cultural content associated with an ethnic identity but in its dichotomization, i.e. in the presence of socially constructed boundaries separating distinct but evolving groups. Such a constructivist approach helps overcoming the shortcomings of a primordialist perspective, which ascribes a defined “objective” content to given ethnic identities. African conflicts are determined neither by the incompatibility of primordial ethnic identities, nor by the intersection of artificial national borders and primordial cultural identities, nor even by the co-existence of several ethnic groups within the borders of a State, as Foucher would have it (1991: 219). All three explanations rely on the given content of ethnic identities rather than on the function of their cognitive boundaries. Processes of ethnogenesis and political socialisation demonstrate identities are not givens to which “good” borders should adapt in order to favour development and prevent conflicts.

This approach entails a revision of the colonial responsibility in the outburst of “ethnic conflicts” in sub-Saharan Africa after independence. Colonial rulers have indeed often played up cultural differences and transformed them into clear-cut oppositions. There are several instances of such *divide et impera* strategies across Africa, as in Ivory Coast, where French administration favoured Akans and Baoulés against Béthés, depicted as lazy, disorganised and mischievous. In Rwanda and in Burundi, German and Belgian rulers have developed and diffused racist theories which have stiffened the fluid social distinction between Tutsis and Hutus into a sharp ethnic difference. Tutsis would originate from a Hamitic descent, a dominant, conquering group by essence superior and prone to rule peaceful and passive Hutus who belong to the Bantu lineage (Chrétien, 1998). The diffusion of such racist discourses points to a profound change in the functions of ethnic boundaries under the colonial rule. As Lemarchand concludes however, “to invoke the evil hand of the colonial State to exonerate social actors of their political responsibilities is hardly convincing” (1995: 25). There is therefore no historical determinism in African “ethnic conflicts”, neither through primordial identities or colonial racist influences. European rulers have stiffened African ethnic boundaries, but it takes political entrepreneurs to crystallise ethnic differences into identity and subordination conflicts.

“Ethnic conflicts” seems far too convenient a heading in this respect for quite different securitisation strategies on the ground. Brass in this respect offers a useful distinction between three types of conflict: *within* ethnic groups, *between* groups and *in relation to the State* (1991), which we will term *enclosure conflicts* (within an ethnic group), *competition conflicts* (among ethnic groups) and
domination conflicts (between a State and an ethnic group). However intertwined in most ethnic conflicts, these three forms of conflicts mobilise different ethnic boundaries and securitising discourses. In a competition conflict two or more ethnic groups confront each other as a threat to their own wealth or survival. Tutsis and Hutus recurrently accused each other of planning mass murders if not genocides, building up the boundary between the communities with fear and culminating the Hutu genocide of Tutsis in 1994. While often overlooked, enclosure conflicts oppose sub-groups within an ethnic community. The ethnic boundary is duplicated to stigmatise part of the group considered not pure or radical enough. Enclosure conflicts play an important role in the radicalisation of ethnic behaviour. The Hutus who perpetrated the genocide against Tutsis in Rwanda thus murdered more than 100,000 moderate Hutus whom they denounced as traitors and threats to the “real” Hutu identity. Domination conflicts oppose a “national community” and a dominated group, often, albeit not necessarily identified on an ethnic basis. National entrepreneurs securitise the minority as a threat to the survival of the State while the dominated group conversely challenges the authority of the national leader. Both sides construct their enemy as a threat to the good functioning of the State to legitimise either public repression or a coup d’Etat. Although political in essence, the boundary involved in domination conflicts has often ethnic underpinnings. The difference between competition and enclosure conflicts lies in the designation of the threat (another ethnic group or perverted insiders). The distinction between domination and competition conflicts rests in the designation of the “referent object” (Buzan, de Wilde and Waever, 1998: 23-6), either a particular ethnic group or a nation.

While these three types of ethnic conflicts fit in the four stages of social conflicts identified by Heinz Messmer (2003), they bear distinct features and may require slightly different forms of perturbation. The European responsibility lies less in the drawing of colonial borders than in their very perception of ethnic boundaries. National borders nevertheless play a role in the regionalisation of African conflicts which we need to investigate further before analysing EU conflict prevention capacities and limitations.

1.2 - The role of national borders and the regionalisation of African conflicts

National borders play a central role both in competition ethnic conflicts and in the regionalisation of all African conflicts. While keeping their geographical outline, most often have been suddenly transformed from administrative colonial delimitations to independent state borders, and new-born African states received their territorial limits without the corresponding national cohesion. The competition and struggles to achieve power soon politicised ethnic affiliations, as for instance in

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3 This distinction draws on the categories of ethnicity identified by Jan Nederveen Pieterse in his inclusive constructivist study (1997). Brass rightly notes that most analyses focus on competition conflicts and particularly neglect enclosure conflicts due to their reified view of ethnic group. Nederveen Pieterse also proposes a fourth, optional ethnicity, based on a de-securitised perception of ethnic identity.
Rwanda, Burundi and Nigeria, and many new rulers attempted in reaction to consolidate an “affective attachment to the territorial unit of citizenship” (Young, 2001: 169). The multiplication of African “failed states” in the 1990s must not obliterate the impact of such policies of national socialisation. They have indeed managed within a few decades to create from naught substantial national identities, with symbols, rites and a wide popular attachment superimposed on multiple ethnic identities. Miles and Rochefort concluded from their case study on Hausaland that villagers on both sides of the Niger/Nigeria border accord national consciousness greater significance than ethnic solidarity (1991: 393). Although generally considered a weak and declining institution in sub-Saharan Africa, the State is a resilient pole of identification for a large part of its population. As Nugent puts it in his analysis on the Ghana/Togo border, “there is an ‘imagined community’ which covers Ghanaian political space and which excludes others who fall on the other side of what was one a colonial dividing line” (1993: 60). While national borders do not trigger conflicts by themselves, they can however be strategically constructed so as to inform conflicting identities.

African borders have been widely used to engage mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion and to construct national identities in opposition to foreign identities. Political instability, economic poverty, epidemic diseases would conveniently be blamed on foreign populations and influences. For instance, migrants are often targeted as threat to the economic wealth of locals, as in the case of Sahel populations in Ghana (Essuman-Johnson, 1993), or Burkinabés in Ivory Coast. In opposition to Houphouët Boigny’s pro-immigration policy, his successor Henri Konan Bédié crafted the concept of *ivoirité* in order to deprive immigrants from the voting rights they used to enjoy. The stigmatisation of foreign immigrants served to denounce the lost of fatherland to foreign landowners, whereas it was mainly meant to make up for Bédié’s lack of charisma in comparison to his predecessor. Burkinabés were particularly targeted as they represent 15% of the population in Ivory Coast. Maryinez Lyons provides another illustration with the perception of Banyaruandans in Uganda as a threat to public health (1993). Banyaruandans coming from neighbouring Rwanda have long been perceived as a sanitary threat by Ugandans since their first arrival in Uganda some 50 years ago. When AIDS was first detected in Uganda in the early 1980s, Banyaruandans among other foreign populations have been blamed for its introduction and spread. African borders therefore play a prominent role in African identity conflicts, albeit not because of their intersection with homogeneous ethnic areas, but in their turn as markers of differentiation and exclusion.

Paradoxically borders are all the more used as cognitive markers as they lack of physical existence. 41% of African borders had never been demarcated by 1991 (Foucher, 1991: 202), and Griffiths counted in 1993 only 345 official road crossing points for a total of 50,000 miles of international borders.

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4 The concept of *ivoirité* states that you are Ivorian if both of your parents are Ivorians, i.e. if both were born in an Ivorian village. Konan Bédié introduced the concept of *ivoirité* in the Electoral Code in 1994 to disqualify his main opponent Alassane Ouattara, suspected of being from Burkinabé descent.
boundaries, that is one every 145 miles of boundary (1993: 70). The administrative weakness of African States favours economic migrants, regional smugglers and borderland communities, who would escape taxes, conscription or forced labour by temporarily moving to neighbouring countries (Nugent and Asiwaju, 1993: 9). The lack of control on border regions raises more pressing issues when it comes to internal subordination conflicts. Rebel movements and foreign mercenaries can easily cross the border to attack a regime and return for shelter. Civil populations often flee to neighbouring countries to escape political or ethnic repression. Africa counted some 4.6 millions refugees on 1 January 2003, but the figure is rapidly changing. There were for instance more than 2 million refugees in the sole Great Lakes region in 1996 in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. There are numerous instances of governments resorting in reaction to expulsions of refugees and retaliations against rebel movements. Internal conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa therefore seldom remain a domestic issue as instability spreads across borders with massive flows of refugees, traffic of small weapons and rebel movements training in neighbouring countries.

If borders represent an opportunity for non-State actors, they are a potential source of insecurity for the regime, who is therefore tempted to use them as markers of exclusion. Securitising discourses constitute a precious resource for political leaders to displace public discontent on minority groups, neighbouring countries or foreign populations settled within the country. Whether based on its real or alleged support for rebellion, the construction of the Foreigner as a threat is therefore a structuring process in many African ethnic conflicts. Whereas foreign interferences fuel internal ethnic conflicts, securitisation discourses tend conversely to duplicate domestic “ethnic” conflicts into identity conflicts between the conflict-affected country and the neighbouring States. The conflict in the Great Lakes region since 1998 offers a good illustration, with “ethnic” conflict (between Hemas and Lendus) involving rebel movements (UPC and RCD-Goma) supported by Uganda and Rwanda, which also have their armed forces present in the country. Ethnic subordination conflicts are therefore often reinforced and complicated by national identity conflicts, resulting what is sometimes referred to as a regional “conflict system”.

The Ivorian conflict clearly illustrates the intricacy of internal subordination conflicts and regional identity conflicts, even though it is not ethnically based. When the conflict erupted on 19 September 2002 with a failed coup in Abidjan, President Gbagbo soon publicly accused President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso of having quartered, trained and supported the MPCI rebel movement. In an article published in the newspaper Notre Voie on September 24, Gbagbo denounced that Compaoré’s only goal was “to destabilise Ivory Coast by all means, even though it endangers the life of Burkinabé immigrants settled in the country”, and further declared that “Ivory Coast, our country, is at war against a regime, that of Blaise Compaoré” (quoted in Banégas and Otayek, 2003). While the

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Ivorian conflict itself had a strong domestic dimension, it is now widely acknowledged that Compaoré has at least passively helped the rebels\(^6\).

Mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion therefore involve both ethnic boundaries and national borders. Securitising discourses construct “ethnic” (internal) and foreign (external) identities as threats to the ethnic group or the national community to secure popular obedience and support. The overall conflict system often superimposes ethnic and regional conflicts, each of them at different stages (issue, identity or subordination conflicts). This alone suffices to sketch the challenges of perturbing African “border conflicts”.

2 - The stakes of de-bordering incompatible identities and the challenges of European perturbations

The complexity of African conflict systems raises numerous challenges for conflict transformation perturbations. The first section will detail the stakes of de-bordering ethnic and national identities in conflicts which often superimpose national borders and ethnic boundaries. The second section analyses some of the comparative advantages that the EU holds over its Member States in this respect, and the particular constellation of perturbation it constructs.

2.1 - Conflict transformation as the de-bordering of conflict identities

Both ethnic boundaries and national borders play an important role in most conflict systems in sub-Saharan Africa. The limited number of separatist and irredentist claims however points to the necessity to understand them as cognitive markers of inclusion and exclusion rather than as territorial delimitations. The different levels of conflict all share similar mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, either over national borders or ethnic boundaries. Hence conflict resolution initiatives should aim at de-bordering conflicting identities rather than at re-drawing official borders. The challenge is especially demanding in post-conflict and post-genocide societies as in Rwanda or Ivory Coast, where identity conflicts still strongly polarise the social fabric. It is as though socially constructed identities could become so deeply entrenched and concrete that they need to be taken into account as quasi-givens. Whatever for instance the historical contingency of the Hutu/Tutsi divide in Rwanda and in Burundi, external perturbation cannot simply ignore it, if only not to fuel it unwittingly.

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\(^6\) The conflict system in however wider in West Africa as the Ivorian conflict can hardly be separated from the instable situations in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. The Liberian government led by Charles Taylor has been accused of fuelling the conflict, as a new rebel movement (MPIGO) attacked the Ivory Coast on its Western borders in November 2002.
This does not amount however to saying that a consistent constructivist analysis should reach the same conclusions as a primordialist approach, even if from opposed premises, when it comes to identifying the means for a successful conflict transformation. Identities may crystallise in opposition to one another, but they never stop evolving to reify into a “given” structure. Borders and boundaries can still scale down the four stages of conflict identified by Messmer (2003) in the aftermath of an appalling subordination conflict. Moreover, sustainable conflict transformation cannot avoid an active involvement in reconciliation and power-sharing programs without incurring the risk of a re-emergence of securitisation discourses and outbursts of violence. As Albert, Diez and Stetter argue, “as long as identity conflicts prevail, the danger of sliding back into subordination is too big to guarantee permanency” (2004: 14). De-bordering conflict identities is an emergency task in post-conflict societies.

International actors have progressively taken into account the identity dimension of African conflict systems. They both try to increase the cost for policy-makers to engage in securitisation strategies and back up alternative communication channels based on multilateral cooperation in a limited number of domains. On the one hand, international actors seek to prevent political leaders from securitising domestic minority groups or foreign countries by threatening in turn to cut or suspend development funding. On the other hand they fund multi-ethnic NGOs and support reconciliation commissions, as in South Africa and the Great Lakes region. Consociationalism and power-sharing processes have also been promoted within capacity- and institution-building programs. Other development projects have an important, albeit indirect impact on conflict identities, whether ethnic or regional. International actors often work within the framework of inclusive programs with national governments, local actors and civil society groups, thereby trying to favour mutual understanding and cooperation. They also stimulate regional cooperation as a pre-requisite for the construction of transnational infrastructures. They can eventually offer a direct political and financial support to regional communities and institutions. However limited in influence and efficiency, these programs allows for a communication mostly deprived of securitisation processes, if not of tensions and conflicts. Regional cooperation in this sense is a means to limit the overarching of societal communication by conflict-related patterns. These development projects share a common emphasis on prioritising interethic or international cooperation as a cross-cutting issue. They mainly address national governments and social actors, and therefore heavily rely on the influence of these social and national elites to diffuse desecuritised cognitive perceptions of the Other.

Brass recognises a specific influence to social elites in the transformation of ethnic boundaries: “the choice of the leading symbol of differentiation depends upon the interests of the elite group that takes up the ethnic cause” (1991: 30). This elite model can also apply to regional identity conflicts. The choice of interlocutors may however become a major challenge for international actors, as governments and civil society actors share their social influence with military groups without legitimacy and on which development cooperation has little leverage. To include them in development programs and in peace negotiations could constitute an indirect form of political recognition and therefore potentially fuel the conflict.
2.2 - The European Union and its member States: both judge and party?

The European Union holds in this respect some comparative advantages over other international actors involved in sub-Saharan Africa, and especially its member States. It stands in a very particular position due both to the level of its commitment to the development of the region and its perceived lack of strategic interest in sub-Saharan Africa. First, the EU is a major international donor in Africa, representing with its member States 67% of all DAC members ODA to the region. Its contractual cooperation agreement with all sub-Saharan African States further puts it in a good position to engage in regional coordination of development aid and regional approaches to conflict transformation. The EU-ACP joint institutions at ministerial and parliamentary levels give it further influence on regional patterns of communication. The EU has prioritised the de-bordering of conflicts identities in its development policy since the mid-1990s. Lastly, it is not stigmatised by a colonial past and it has repeatedly tried to distance itself from the colonial history of many of its member States. As a whole, the EU still enjoys a rather positive image among African social and national elites.

Only few political initiatives were taken before the 1990s, except in relation to South Africa. The EU conflict prevention policy in sub-Saharan Africa has then been progressively developed through both development cooperation and CFSP. On the one hand, the progressive integration of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention concerns in the EC-ACP partnership has turned it into an influential instrument for conflict transformation. The Council has on the other hand multiplied common positions on African instability as a whole and on particular conflicts, especially in the Great Lakes region and in West Africa (Council, 1995, 1997, 2001) where Special Representatives have been appointed. This increasing attention on African conflicts has raised concerns over the coherence between CFSP and Development Cooperation instruments, as voiced in particular by the Development Council (1997b, 1998) and in the debates at the European Convention (2003; Nielson, 2002). The lack of cross-pillar coordination is a major limitation to the influence of the EU conflict prevention policy in sub-Saharan Africa.

The effectiveness of a conflict perturbation however also depends on the way the external actor is perceived and how its actions are interpreted. As Albert, Diez and Stetter state, the EU is not a homogenous actor with a defined and coherent political agenda in foreign relations, “but rather a complex political organisation which includes a diverse set of collective actors, which in turn often have diverse perceptions both on specific border conflicts and on the conflict parties” (2004: 26).

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8 Source: OECD DAC.

9 The EU has long insisted on the role of identity groups in many African conflicts. The Development Council for instance confirmed in 1998 that development assistance should be designed and implemented in a way that it helps to address the root causes in a targeted manner, by support for: the balancing of political, social, economic and cultural opportunities among different identity groups within developing countries; effective mechanisms for the peaceful conciliation of group interests and for the bridging of dividing lines among different identity groups; a vibrant civil society. (Council, 1998)
While this judgement fully applies to European institutions, as Krause has demonstrated in the case of the Commission (2003), it is above all true of its member States. Their different traditions regarding African conflicts range from post-colonial recurrent interventionism to high contribution in ODA, participation to UN peace-keeping missions or rather passive indifference. French and British African policies often stand in conflicting positions, essentially because of their respective colonial pasts and their diverging interests. These incompatibilities have favoured cooperation between “like-minded States”, as Sweden, Finland and Canada over European cooperation.

Some member States moreover stand in a particular position as they are considered as parties in the conflict by the African conflict parties. Their economic, military and often personal ties with certain regimes account for a perception which identifies them as actors in the conflict system. They would constitute a third (international) dimension of the conflict beyond the domestic and regional ones. France for instance maintains defence agreements, military assistance programs with many Francophone countries, and maintains permanent military bases all across Africa. Such involvements have profound diplomatic consequences. France is still considered as an enemy by the current Rwandan government because of its support for the previous regime. The resumption of Belgian aid after the genocide in Rwanda was for instance perceived with much more suspicion than the simultaneous return of EC delegations (de Câmara, 2001).

This diversity has made it difficult to reach a common and clear position and to have it clearly perceived by African partners. While the European involvement in Africa was marked in its early days by French post-colonial practices in its African colonies (Dimier, 2003), it has gained progressive autonomy, mostly with the institutionalisation of development cooperation and the accession of new member States with different traditions and priorities (United Kingdom, Nordic countries) (Loisel, 2003). It is now clearly perceived as distinct from its member States, and not necessarily sharing their political priorities. The lack of perceptible European interests is a major asset in this respect. The constellation of perturbation between the EU and the conflict parties is therefore complex and unique in many respects. The political priorities of member States and the perception of their policy by the conflict parties greatly hamper conflict transformation policies implemented by the EU.

Given its large development cooperation and its perceived lack of interests, the European Union holds a particular position regarding conflict transformation in sub-Saharan Africa. The diverging interests of its member States and their engagement as parties in African conflicts however limit its overall impact.
The EU conflict prevention policy in sub-Saharan Africa relies on two main elements, CFSP decisions and the EC development cooperation with ACP states. This section applies the framework developed by Albert, Diez and Stetter (2003-4) to both EU development cooperation and CFSP initiatives in Africa, with a clear emphasis on the political dimension of the former.

The Cotonou agreement (2000) has profoundly politicised the EU-ACP partnership (Petiteville, 2001; Loisel, 2003). It is now structured around three pillars, namely preferential trade relations, development aid through EDF funds and a permanent political dialogue (Prodi, 2002). The first section describes the progressive introduction of political conditionality in the EU-ACP relationship and how it grants the EU with a compulsory impact on its ACP partners. The second section analyses how the EU exerts an enabling impact on African leaders by promoting regional integration as an alternative to securitising strategies. The third section will present the support of local authorities and civil society actors foreseen in the Cotonou Agreement, as a way for the EU to exert a connective and maybe constructive impact on African border conflicts.

3.1 - The development of political conditionality: a compulsory impact

Development cooperation in the framework of the EU-ACP relationship has been historically constructed on a contractual basis since the first Lomé Convention (1975). The EU pledges a given amount of funds to the European Development Fund (EDF) on a five-year basis which the ACP States are formally entitled to claim should the EU default. Article 2 of the Lomé Convention further mentions the respect of the sovereignty and self-determination of the partners (Lomé I, art.2), which practically prevented the EC/EU from using its aid as “carrot” or a “stick”. Recent evolutions in the EU-ACP relationship have allowed for development cooperation to be used in diplomatic negotiations with sub-Saharan countries. This compulsory influence is moreover explicitly restricted to human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance, and cannot be used to achieve any other goal. As with the offer of membership or association, cooperation therefore offers a powerful political leverage on its partners.

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10 The ACP (Africa-Caribbean-Pacific) numbers 78 countries, including 48 of the 54 African States. The 5 Mediterranean States belong to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership (1995) and South Africa has signed a specific Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) with the EU in 2000. The agreement is formally passed between the ACP group and the EC, as the EU has no legal personality yet.

11 Even though it was signed in June 2000, the Cotonou agreement entered into force in April 2003. The implementation of its innovations relating to conflict prevention is therefore at an early stage.

12 The previous Yaoundé Conventions (1963-1975) had been signed shortly after the independence to establish an “association” between the EEC and the former French colonies. The Lomé Convention abandoned the term in favour of “cooperation”. 
The EU development cooperation policy with ACP countries has indeed undergone a steady politicisation since the mid-1980s. References to political norms have been introduced which have gradually become legally binding. The ACP States started the process by asking for a reference to the respect of human rights as a common “belief” in the third Lomé Convention (1985), in order to stigmatise the United Kingdom and the Netherlands for their continuing economic relations with the apartheid regime in South Africa. The EU however obtained that it be placed in an annex rather than in the body of the text (Greenidge, 1999: 116). By 1989, the situation had reversed and pressure came from EU member states to mention human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the body of the Lomé Convention IV. The Lomé Convention IVb (1995) further characterised these values as “essential to the aim of the Convention”. The possibility to suspend development aid was introduced, albeit not much elaborated (art. 366 bis). A consultation procedure was established to determine when aid should be suspended. The Cotonou agreement has set a formal procedure for aid suspension in cases of wide human rights abuses (art. 96). It has also facilitated potential aid reduction strategies, thanks to new rolling programs and potential adjustment of Country Strategy Papers (CSP) against conflict-fuelling regimes. Already envisaged in Lomé IV bis, mid-term reviews have become systematic under the new agreement. This allows for a certain level of redistribution of resources to recompense good performers and remove unused funds from poor performers. Greater flexibility is however available for a balanced application of the performance criteria in conflict-affected countries.

The suspension of aid to Togo provides an interesting illustration of the potential of political conditionality, as it was decided before conditionality was formally established in the IV bis Lomé Convention and continued until today. European aid to Togo has been suspended in 1993 for “democratic deficit”, after biased elections marked by frauds, arbitrary arrests and political assassinations. Several EU member States had then followed on and bilaterally sanctioned Togo too, with the notable exception of France, which has remained a staunch ally of the regime. The domestic situation has not fundamentally changed, and General Eyadéma has been re-elected in June 2003, after having modified the Constitution and disqualified most of his opponents. In order to improve its reputation, the regime has however led several initiatives in the ECOWAS framework in favour of the resolution of the conflict in Ivory Coast. It has also invited the ACP ambassadors in Lomé to meet political leaders of the opposition and representatives from the human rights associations. The European Commission has recently asked the Council to engage formally in a political dialogue with Togo, to reinforce democracy and the rule of law.

Several researches have been conducted on the political conditionality of European aid, particularly after Lomé IV bis. Most tend to highlight the limited number of sanctions adopted. Youngs (2001, 356) for instance shows how European coercive reactions were limited to human rights abuses (as in Libya and Sudan) or to dramatic interruptions of democratic processes, as the coups d’Etat in Togo, Niger, Comoros and the Ivory Coast. Cooperation was only “wound down” in cases of internal
conflicts, as in Somalia, Rwanda and Burundi. Nigeria was sanctioned only after the execution of Ogoni activists in 1995. Aid suspension often occurs too late when social tensions and securitisation strategies have already raised a significant level, as in Zaire (Congo DRC), Zambia, Kenya and Zimbabwe. The consultation procedure is theoretically reciprocal, which could account for the few occurrences of aid suspension, but the EU retains in practice much of the decision power (Arts, 1999). Smith (1998) has interpreted these mixed results as the consequences of diverging interests among EU member states. Even though the mere possibility of aid suspension might act as an inhibiting factor, many African leaders seem to rely on their privileged relations with particular EU members and on the consequent divisions in the Council to block effectively most sanctions.

Political conditionalitry is rendered difficult in case of domestic subordination conflicts when development aid actors cannot work in sufficient security conditions. Development aid is then suspended not as a political sanction but as a practical necessity. Political conditionalitry can however be used against the neighbouring States supporting the rebel movements - provided that there is sufficient political will and a regional approach to development cooperation. The Franco-British disagreement on Rwanda is good example both of member States diverging interests and political conditionality on neighbouring countries. The UK has been fully supporting the Kagame regime since 1997, notably with the strong personal support of Clare Short. The French support for the previous and extremist Hutu regime has made partly responsible for the 1994 genocide in the eye of the new government, which clearly perceives France as an enemy. While the UK had granted exceptional amounts of aid for direct budgetary report to the Rwandan government, France kept strong reservations on its democratic nature and withheld part of its bilateral aid (da Cámara, 2001).

The Operation Artemis in North-Eastern Congo totally changed the situation in 2003. The joint presence of French and British military under an EU flag had their national interests converging on the success of the first out-of-area EU military mission. The EU adopted a common stance vis-à-vis interfering parties, to have them ceasing to support their respective militias in Congo DRC. The EU Special Representative in the Great Lakes region Aldo Ajello and the High Representative for CFSP used informal political conditionality, notably during the HR visit to Kampala (Uganda) and Kigali (Rwanda) in July. Such covert “carrots” and “sticks” probably helped to stop the Rwandan-backed RCD-Goma offensive in Northern Kivu at the beginning of July, which was potentially threatening the stability in Ituri and about which the EU Operational Headquarter in Paris had asked the COPS for

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13 France had explicitly required a British participation to launch the mission in a place where Rwandan militias supported by Kagame were engaged, and where an exclusively French operation would have been ill-perceived, if not militarily opposed.

diplomatic action\textsuperscript{15}. They however prove that, unlike integration and association (Albert, Diez and Setter, 2004: 12), cooperation can be useful in perturbing African subordination conflicts.

### 3.2 - The support for regional economic integration and regional organisations: an enabling impact

EU development cooperation actively promotes regional integration processes all across Africa. The regionalisation of development programs is an incentive for national policy-makers not to engage in non-securitising communication with their neighbours. The EU also offers a political and financial support to the African regional economic communities and their institutions. Economic and security coordination at the regional level is perceived by Europeans officials as a way to improve the security conditions. As Albert, Diez and Stetter argue in the case of integration and association, the “socialisation of policy-makers in conflict regions into a ‘European’ discourse that […] builds upon the frame of ‘integration and peace’ and, therefore, potentially supports desecuritisation moves by policy-makers.” (2004: 23) The same analysis applies to the EU support for regional integration in sub-Saharan Africa, even though European integration operates there as a model rather than as a perspective.

The European support for African regionalism is mainly channelled through the development strategies of the EU-ACP partnership. The Cotonou Agreement has introduced the negotiation of Regional Economic Partnership Agreements (REPAs) to complete the economic partnerships (EPAs) concluded at a national level. Four such agreements have been negotiated with the regional organisations mandated by the ACP group (SADC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, COMESA-IGAD\textsuperscript{16}) and based on previous Regional Indicative Programs (RIPs). Mid-term reviews of the regional programs have been planned for 2004. The Commission has pushed in 2002 for the regional programmings of the 9\textsuperscript{th} EDF to include conflict prevention as a non-focal priority for cooperation. As such, it is taken into account in the framing of all focal cooperation areas, e.g. regional infrastructures or regional economic integration, even though it receives comparatively less funding. Beyond programs explicitly targeting conflict prevention, it is expected that regional cooperation will both help diminish the monopolisation of interstate communication by identity conflicts and offer positional alternatives for political leaders to engage in desecuritisation.

The EU is further promoting regional dialogues both at the regional and continental levels. Its financial and political support for regional integration is therefore not directed only at national elites

\textsuperscript{15} Personal interview with Général Neveux, Operation Commander of the EU-led Artemis mission in Congo DRC, March 2004.

for them to socialise on a cooperative basis, but also at regional institutions as such. The Council decisions have made clear that it considered African regional organisations as full-fledged political partners. The latest Council Common Position on Conflict Prevention in Africa (2004: Article 4) for instance states that

*Recognising that the AU and African sub-regional organisations constitute the central actors in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa:*

1) *The EU shall seek to increase its support to regional arrangements and efforts in conflict prevention* by enhancing corporate responsibility, strengthening the rule of law, training in conflict prevention, building capacities for, inter alia, political and economic analyses, early warning systems, negotiation/mediation skills, improving international sanctioning and enforcement mechanisms, developing mechanisms that address economic factors that fuel conflicts, and strengthening linkages between regional organisations themselves as well as with local, national and regional non-state actors and other members of the international community. Efforts to support regional and sub-regional organisations in the area of conflict prevention shall be carefully coordinated by the Community and its Member States so as to develop joint initiatives and synergies, including through joint programming where appropriate;

2) The EU’s support for and cooperation with the AU in the field of conflict prevention, management and resolution shall be pursued with a view to developing a long-term partnership, particularly in the framework of the follow-up to the Cairo Summit.¹⁷

Political dialogues with regional actors (SADC, ECOWAS, IGAD..) have been prepared and launched. The EU has thus supported mediation efforts entrusted to pan-African or regional organisations, such as the IGAD mediation mission (on Ethiopia/Eritrea), the Lusaka agreements and the inter-Congolese dialogue (on Congo DRC). The high-level political dialogue between the EU and ECOWAS also resulted in a 235M euros grant to ECOWAS in the framework of the 9th EDF regional programming, including 35M for non-focal sectors and conflict prevention. Even though Togo is still under EU sanctions and thus barred from direct EDF funds, it nevertheless benefits from the EU funding for regional cooperation through ECOWAS and the UEMOA (West African Economic and Monetary Union). Another example is the EU support for the SADC initiative “Prevention and Combating of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Related Crimes”. This regional cooperative initiative has been adopted in 1999 to fight cross-border trafficking in light weapons and drugs. The program has even led to the creation of the Southern African Regional Police Cooperation (SARPCO), a regional police agency. The EC has backed the initiative with financial, technical and political

¹⁷ Our emphasis.
support since its inception and a joint EU-SADC working group meets twice a year to discuss ways to enhance the cooperation.

The EU is also developing strong links with the nascent African Union\textsuperscript{18} (AU), which it supports financially, politically and institutionally. At the political level, the EU-AU summit in April 2000 launched the Cairo dialogue process, prioritizing regional integration, regional trade, and the prevention and resolution of conflicts (Mackie, 2003)\textsuperscript{19}. Financial support came simultaneously with a 12M euros grant, including 2M euros for the establishment and institutional development of the AU, and 10M for its work on peace and security. Institutionally, the re-naming and the internal organisation of the African Union (Council, Commission, Parliament and later a Court of Justice) evince the structural influence of the EU. Work is underway to identify what support the EC could provide to the institutional development of the AU Commission. The idea has for instance been raised to appoint an EC special representative to the AU.

The EU has also recently started financing African peacekeeping and disarmament operations. 50M euros from the FED have been granted to the West African Peace Force in Liberia (ECOMIL), led by ECOWAS, in particular for fighters reinsertion programmes (August 2003). Similarly, the EU has provided 25M euros to the first AU peacekeeping mission (AMIB), launched in Burundi and composed of 2700 military forces from South Africa, Ethiopia and Mozambique. The AU has formally asked for the creation of a European facility for African peace-keeping at the Maputo AU summit in July 2003. The Commission subsequently proposed a Peace Support Operations Facility at the 2003 EU-ACP Ministerial Council (November 2003). A few days later, the Council has adopted the proposition, which still requires a formal approval of the EU-ACP ministerial Council. 250M euros could be used from the 9th EDF\textsuperscript{20} to equip (but not to arm) African peace-keeping forces, for logistical support (transport) and daily pay-offs.

That neither accession nor association to the EU constitutes a sensible perspective for sub-Saharan countries does therefore not prevent the EU from exerting enabling impact based on a “peace and integration” discourse. On the contrary, its active promotion of regional integration in Africa bears

\textsuperscript{18} The transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union has been marked by a shift away from the non-interventionist stance of the former. The AU has launched the Conference on Security, Stability, Cooperation and Development in Africa (CSSDCA), originally initiated by African civil society and meant to strengthen the RECs conflict resolution capacities and to favour the involvement of civil actors. It also harbours the NEPAD initiative (New Partnership for African Development), first proposed by African leaders to the G8 and then included in the AU. A large part of its development activities are based on regional cooperation programs, such as the construction of regional infrastructures and cross-border trade roads. It has launched a new control mechanism, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), meant to favour constructive dialogue among its member States. The AU is developing early warning capabilities, with the forthcoming Peace and Security Directorate, the Conflict Management Centre (CMC), the Peace Support Operations Division and the planning of African Stand-By Forces (ASF) for 2010.

\textsuperscript{19} A second summit was originally planned in Lisbon in April 2003, which a disagreement on the enforcement of EU’s travel ban on Zimbabwean officials has indefinitely postponed (Mackie, 2003). Cooperation has continued in the margins of the AU summit in Maputo with an EU-Africa Troika meeting.

\textsuperscript{20} These €250M euros will be composed of €126,4M from allocations earmarked to African countries under the 9th EDF (1.5% will be “shaved off” each country allocation), and €123,6M from unallocated funds from the 9th EDF. This amounts to an effective participation of African States up to half of the total funds available.
witness of its capacity both to strengthen new security actors and to induce hostile national leaders to cooperate with one another.

3.3 - Decentralised cooperation and political dialogue: perspectives for an EU connective and constructive impact

The EU development cooperation has long exclusively worked with governments and national agencies. A growing awareness of the role that civil society actors can play in post-conflict peace-building emerged among European actors in the 1990s. As the revised Council Common Position on Conflict Prevention in Africa (2004: Article 9) eventually states:

*Throughout the different phases of the conflict cycle, the EU shall:*

– evaluate the important role that "non-state actors" can play either fuelling conflict or helping to resolve or prevent it. Either way, their role and the positive contribution they may make, needs to be accounted for,

– encourage the application of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, through ensuring that a gender perspective informs planning, implementing and evaluating the impact of conflict, the needs of the different actors in conflict and the level and nature of participation in decision-making in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, including peace processes and negotiations […]*

Cooperation with civil society actors is the main channel for funding earmarked for human rights and democracy programs. Youngs highlights the “distinctive, bottom-up approach” adopted by the EU in its democracy assistance programs, designed to dovetail with socially focused ‘grassroots’ development work (2001: 362). Development cooperation thereby allows the EU to exert a real, although still limited connective impact on local associations and African civil networks. Such actors can “provide a counterweight to the societal reach of securitisation” (Albert, Diez and Stetter, 2004: 24). Strikingly, whereas all other EU development aid to Togo has been frozen, the Commission has maintained its cooperation with civil society actors, especially in the field of health and education. The sanctions being targeted against the regime, the EU has applied a principle of “non-penalisation” of the civil population.

The Cotonou agreement recognises the importance of civil society in economic and social development. It has accordingly enlarged the range of potential EU development partners to civil

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21 Our emphasis. The text of the Common Position usefully insists on the ambivalence of non-state actors in the transformation of a conflict. A distinction could indeed be drawn between civil society and non-state actors (NSA), the former limited to all non-profit, non-militarised associations whereas the latter also includes commercial and militarised groups (Alexander and al., 2004).
actors. The agreement also mentions local authorities and the private sector. Article 2 states as a principle of the agreement that:

apart from central government as the main partner, the partnership shall be open to different kinds of other actors in order to encourage the integration of all sections of society, including the private sector and civil society organisations, into the mainstream of political, economic and social life;\(^\text{22}\)

The new agreement offers a financial and political support to a wider array of local NGOs, working in either micro-economic development, healthcare or reconciliation sector. It however requires from local actors to know about Cotonou provisions and EC procedures, and from the Commission to identify reliable partners. The ACP Secretariat and the European-based association ECDPM have launched a series of actions to improve the knowledge of African civil society about the opportunities of EDF funding. It foresees their participation in the negotiations of the National Indicative Programs between the Commission and each African State. Local, private and civil actors must “be informed and involved in consultation on cooperation policies and strategies, on priorities for cooperation especially in areas that concern or directly affect them, and on the political dialogue” (art.4).

The Cotonou agreement moreover also grants an official recognition of the role civil society can play in processes of conflict prevention and reconciliation. Local and civil society actors have been explicitly included in the political dialogue, which aims at developing EU-ACP political cooperation in areas of common concern. Its agenda explicitly includes democracy, human rights, peace-building, conflict prevention and corruption, among others. Such a procedure is meant both to improve the efficiency of political conditionality and to prevent the necessity of resorting to it. There is a further trend toward the support of regional networks and capacities of like-minded civil society actors in support of formal regional organisations, such as the West African Network on Small Arms (WAANSA).

In conflict-affected countries, such cooperation is proving much more difficult to achieve. The identification of potential partners raises specific challenges in polarised societies. After violent conflicts, the State is generally keen on restricting the political space, as in Rwanda or Congo. Local EC delegations are well-placed to select trust-worthy partners, but it requires time to get to know the internal dynamics of a civil society and avoid being caught in internal political competition (da Câmara, 2001). Moreover, external funds have tended to create new opportunist NGOs, as for instance in Congo, instead of relying on pre-existing, experienced organisations, therefore weakening the civil society peace-building capacity as a whole (Bourque and Sampson, 2001).

\(^{22}\) Article 9 adds that: The Community shall provide support for political, institutional and legal reforms and for building the capacity of public and private actors and civil society in the framework of strategies agreed jointly between the State concerned and the Community.” (our emphasis)
By directly funding local and civil society actors, the EU has therefore granted itself a connective impact on African border conflicts. By integrating them in the scope of its political dialogue with ACP States, it has created a potential instrument to exert a constructive impact on identity reconciliation at the grass root level.

**Conclusion**

The EU identity has long been legitimised as a period of lasting peace, and constructed in opposition to the recurrent conflicts that ravaged the continent before 1945 (Waever 1998: 90). A similar discursive pattern is discernible in the EC development cooperation, heralded since 1975 in sharp contrast with the previous colonial practices of some of its Member States. The inclusive conflict prevention policy in sub-Saharan Africa developed by the European Union could clearly draw on the same type of discourse. African “border conflicts” often superimpose conflicts across ethnic boundaries and national borders, for which European colonial powers are partly responsible. This intricacy accounts for a large part of the difficulty encountered by external actors in de-securitising border conflicts and achieving successful conflict perturbation.

The EU conflict prevention and resolution in sub-Saharan Africa combines both CFSP instruments and EU-ACP development cooperation. The Cotonou agreement adopted in 2000 has enhanced its political leverage in the region by creating a political dialogue encompassing conflict prevention issues, enlarging EU development cooperation to local, civil and regional actors, and improving political conditionality. The EU institutional relationship with ACP States therefore allows the EU to exert an influence on border conflicts beyond its immediate rim where it does not benefit from the powerful leverage of potential enlargement. Cooperation has turned into a significant instrument for the EU to exert an influence on African border conflicts where neither accession nor association are applicable.

The framework developed by Albert, Diez and Stetter (2003, 2004) for the analysis of integration and association can usefully be applied to identify the paths through which the EU intervenes in border conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa. First, it exerts an evident influence on State actors through the “carrot and stick” approach of political conditionality (compulsory impact). Its promotion of regional integration also has an impact on political elites, by strengthening institutional and discursive regional frameworks as credible alternatives to more traditional securitisation strategies (enabling impact). Thirdly, decentralised cooperation offers a financial and organisational support to local and civil society actors that can bring a significant societal to contribution to successful conflict transformation.
(connective impact), even though its implementation is only beginning. By setting inclusive political
dialogues to which non-governmental actors can participate, the EU eventually could get involved in
grassroots peace-building initiatives and exert a constructive impact on the construction of compatible
social identities at the local, national and regional scales.

Three factors however specifically limit the influence of EU development cooperation in sub-Saharan
Africa. First, the EU is less involved in the conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa than on its immediate
border, both in terms of political will and institutional capacities. Second, the complex institutional
arrangements between the Commission and the Council hamper the coordination between Community
and CFSP instruments, which is damaging the EU impact on African border conflicts. Third, diverging
national interests often prevent effective cooperation among member States to the detriment of the EU
influence in conflict transformation, as in the Great Lakes region.

We hope to be soon able to illustrate and assess the capacities and limitations of EU cooperation in the
transformation of African border conflicts with the two concrete examples of the Mano River and the
Great Lakes conflicts.

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