EUI Working Papers

RSCAS 2008/03

MEDITERRANEAN PROGRAMME SERIES

Seizing Layers within a Multi-layered Structure:
How the EU Deals with Security and Where the
GCC Could Fit In

René Daniel Gorenflo

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE

ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

MEDITERRANEAN PROGRAMME SERIES

Seizing Layers within a Multi-layered Structure:
How the EU Deals with Security and Where the GCC Could Fit In

RENÉ DANIEL GORENFLO

EUI Working Paper **RSCAS** 2008/03

Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies

The Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSCAS), directed by Stefano Bartolini since September 2006, is home to a large post-doctoral programme. Created in 1992, it aims to develop inter-disciplinary and comparative research and to promote work on the major issues facing the process of integration and European society.

The Centre hosts major research programmes and projects, and a range of working groups and ad hoc initiatives. The research agenda is organised around a set of core themes and is continuously evolving, reflecting the changing agenda of European integration and the expanding membership of the European Union.

Details of this and the other research of the Centre can be found on:
http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Research/

Research publications take the form of Working Papers, Policy Papers, Distinguished Lectures and books. Most of these are also available on the RSCAS website:
http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Publications/

The EUI and the RSCAS are not responsible for the opinion expressed by the author(s).

Mediterranean Programme

The Mediterranean Programme was set up at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies of the European University Institute in 1998. It focuses on the Mediterranean region.

The Mediterranean Programme engages in research with the twin aims of: a) generating intellectually excellent scholarly work; and b) contributing to the general policy debate relating to the flows of persons, goods and ideas between and within the Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western Mediterranean areas.

The Mediterranean Programme and its activities have been financed by: Capitalia, Compagnia di San Paolo, Eni spa, Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, European Commission, European Investment Bank, Fondazione Monte dei Paschi di Siena, and Regione Toscana.

The Annual Mediterranean Research Meeting brings together scholars from across the region.

http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Research/Mediterranean/Meetings.shtml

For further information:
Mediterranean Programme
Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies
European University Institute
Via delle Fontanelle, 19
50016 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI), Italy
Fax: + 39 055 4685 770
E-mail: MedProgSecretary@eui.eu
http://www.eui.eu/RSCAS/Research/Mediterranean/Index.shtml

Abstract

This article starts with a qualitative analysis of the security functions of the European Union (EU) and how they are distributed within its institutional set-up. The analysis then takes recourse to structuralist and governance approaches to security, namely structural diplomacy and security governance to make a case of how the EU can be(come) a relevant security partner in the Gulf region and for the members of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), at least in theory. The second part of the article then examines what cooperation between the EU and the GCC in security terms could look like and an inventory is taken of the practical infrastructure for such an endeavour. Finally, suggestions are made on how such an infrastructure for cooperation could be improved by both sides to enhance long-term cooperation.

Keywords

Introduction[*]

The relationship between the member states of the European Union (EU) and the member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (or, as is the official title, the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf) (GCC) is manifold and primarily based on intensive commercial exchanges as well as, in the case of some of the member states, shared moments in history.

Identifying and highlighting the different fields of relations between states is not an easy task, but when trying to fathom the relations and interactions of two regional constructs, the EU and the GCC, such a task turns difficult and confusing as both of these regional 'organisations' do in some ways represent the sum of their constituent parts, but the EU, in some sectors, is also an actor of its own right, even if with some limits in its *marge de manoeuvre*. The GCC, as a purely intergovernmental organisation does not display the same level of institutional complexity which adds to the analytical problem if one regards the relations between two regional groups which are quite dissimilar in their institutional make-up and respective capabilities. When discussing EU-GCC relations, in particular with respect to security issues, one therefore needs to be well aware of the analytical focus which one applies: there are national, sub-regional, regional or organisational levels of relations between the two regions and its constituting entities which each have their own dynamic and differ from sector to sector.

Before examining how EU-GCC relations could improve in terms of security, which is the purpose of this article, it might be worthwhile giving a brief snapshot of the status quo of the domain in which EU-GCC relations show the strongest signs progress. The economic relations between the two regions (or rather between EU and GCC member states, as a comprehensive EU-GCC Free Trade Agreement is still pending) are already well established and can be considered truly inter-dependent and developed: In terms of trade the GCC was the EU's fifth largest export partner, ahead of Japan[1] and the 7th most important import partner (just ahead of Turkey) in 2005. For the GCC the EU remains the largest single import partner and is the second most important export partner (after Japan). After years of a positive trade balance for the EU, this has changed in 2006 when the EU was running a trade deficit with the GCC[2]. With the Gulf States' economies booming, European countries have, contrary to one's expectations, only just about managed to keep their GCC market share constant in relative terms, in disaggregate figures its relative market share has in some cases actually declined (EU-Kuwait trade for example). This is reflective of the fact that European exports in the Gulf region, as elsewhere, face increasingly strong competition from other regions in the world. In the Gulf region the EU's main competitors are Asian economies. While the EU's absolute trade position in the Gulf may still be comfortable, this soon may change, helped by strong linkages and social networks between the expatriate workforce in the Gulf states and their home territories (many in South Asia). Irrespective of other (energy-related) strategic interests which the EU may have in the Gulf region, it seems therefore ever more appropriate to coordinate efforts and raise the EU's visibility and image in the region in order to retain a strong position in a highly-solvent market for high quality products.

With respect to other mutual points of contact, such as energy, environmental, cultural or security cooperation, EU-GCC relations still look very meagre. Nevertheless, stronger EU engagement in the region is repeatedly called for (Grgic, 2004)—and as far as such calls concern the security domain, voices sometimes stress that the EU would eventually need to assert its interest in military terms like

---

the US does, too, sometimes voices call for an increased EU role with the function of a regional mediator in the hope to attenuate antagonisms.

If and how the EU could become a security actor shall be explored in this article. Beginning with a more conceptual part, it is examined how the EU deals with security given its specific institutional set-up and what kind of EU actorness in the security domain one could thence expect. The article will then make use of a structuralist approach by looking at EU security provision in 'full institutional terms' when applying the concept of structural diplomacy. A further extension will then look at how EU security actorness can be understood in terms of security governance. In a more policy-oriented second part of this article it is then examined which institutional provisions are actually in place to make the EU a '(soft) security actor' in the Gulf and what endemic obstacles remain, and areas of cooperation will be identified which could, in a step-by-step approach result in an increasing security profile of the EU in the Gulf region.

Possible security dimensions of EU-GCC relations

A multitude of actors and an institutional division

European activities in the Gulf are manifold and include a great number of horizontal and vertical actors, such as (multi-)national companies, bilateral diplomatic or economic relations between an EU member state and a GCC member state, activities of NGOs and semi-governmental bodies, (a few) bilateral academic exchanges, but also relations between a European Union body/institution -this could be the European Commission, the European Council or the European Parliament (EP) on a variety of domains or specialised bodies such as the European Central Bank (ECB) in the area of financial/monetary relations- with a GCC member state or the GCC Secretariat. *European Union* action, on the contrary, is to be understood differently in the respect that here it shall only designate *collective* European activities (under the umbrella of the European Union) vis-à-vis the GCC. Such activities can usually be subsumed either under the intergovernmental (second pillar) or the supranational (first pillar) domain of EU foreign policy. The former, *intergovernmental,* domain covers European Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), a policy area which member states so far have been reluctant to cede to a higher, supranational level. The institution responsible for intergovernmental decision-making is the European Council, which resembles the GCC Summits with the difference that policy coordination and consultation comprise a much larger number of portfolios and that meetings are highly frequent and take place in an institutionalised fashion. The latter, *supranational* domain of the European Union comprises a legally separate entity which is the European Community (EC); it incorporates and integrates the previously separate European Economic Community, the European Community of Coal and Steel and Euratom. As concerns the relations of the EU with third countries, the EC is primarily responsible for the EU's trade relations with other countries, but also for related political issues as well as several forms of development aid. Such relations, which are constrained by the restricted mandate of the European Community, are by definition not a foreign policy domain but actually distinctly named "external relations" and are, as well as the negotiation of treaties with third parties and their safeguarding, managed by the European Commission[3], the supranational institution of the European Union. This strict legal institutional separation[4] of foreign policy and external matters assigns therefore different responsibilities to the EU institutions concerned, even though in practice there is overlap and coordination between those policy areas. The abovementioned institutional division of the European Union (the intergovernmental and

---

3   The Directorates-General of the European Commission responsible for affairs with the GCC are DG Trade and DG External Relations (RELEX)

4   This institutional division holds - at least de jure, see: Stetter, S. 'Cross-pillar politics: functional unity and institutional fragmentation of EU foreign policies', *Journal of European Public Policy*, August 2004

the supranational part) is an important starting point when one is discussing security issues with respect to EU-GCC relations.

Locating security within the institutional framework

Traditionally, EU security activities are lodged within the second pillar of the European Union, in the intergovernmental domain. In 1999 the European Council of Cologne adopted the objective to establish a *European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)* with the aim to set up military capabilities of the EU, primarily in the area of peace-building, peace-enforcement and aid and evacuation in cases of emergency (Council,1999:Annex III). Subsequently a European Rapid Reaction Force has been established (Council, 2003) and a number of military (and also some police) missions under the umbrella of ESDP were undertaken[5]. Nevertheless, EU military operations conducted so far have been very small in scale and have generally taken place in the direct EU neighbourhood and corresponded to the strong national interest of at least one of the member states. Mission command and implementation is often exercised by only one member-state (France was mission leader and provider of the lion share of forces for the Artemis mission in Congo, for example).

Looking at the direct operational capacity of the EU to provide and project security outside of its own territory, it is evident that the EU's *marge de manoeuvre* in direct military terms is quite limited (individual EU member states of course have a much more powerful range of action). This is further complicated by the provisions of the Berlin Plus agreement which regulates the relationship between the EU and NATO (replacing previous agreements between the Western European Union and NATO) by limiting the EU's fields of action to those domains where NATO has declined to act and by outlining close coordination with NATO before any action is taken (NATO, 2003).

Security beyond the military domain

The EU's lack of a huge centralised military apparatus may be interpreted as a sign of weakness by some, but it can also be seen as the response to the more complex forms which security provision may take today. The European Security Strategy (ESS) which eventually was adopted by the European Council in December 2003 (Council, 2003) is quite revealing of the approach which the European Union is likely to take in the projection of security elsewhere. While the security strategy was "applauded by US diplomats for its contribution to a 'new realism' in transatlantic relations" (FT, 2003) it nevertheless carries a distinctly European note, particularly when juxtaposed to the US National Security Strategy (NSS).

> The manner in which 'dynamic' threats should be tackled differs. The ESS accepts that 'we should be ready to act before a crisis occurs'. But it links this statement to the relatively familiar concepts of 'conflict prevention and threat prevention'—whereas the NSS, notoriously, had defined a right of 'pre-emptive' (military) action when necessary against emergent new as well as old threats. More carefully examined, the ESS does not at any point explicitly say what conditions or restraints should apply to threat-based military interventions, but it creates the overwhelming impression that these should be undertaken in a multilateral context and with a proper legal base.[…] As the obverse for its refusal to name enemies, when referring to countries 'outside the bounds of international society' the ESS document advocates a transformational and inclusive solution: 'It is desirable that such countries should rejoin the international community, and the EU should be ready to provide assistance.' (Bailes, 2005: 16-17).

Indeed, it seems that the EU, also in its intergovernmental branch, has come to institutionalise a new security agenda which challenges the traditional realist account of security politics: "This agenda consists of a far wider range of issues than military security: indeed, security itself has been redefined

---

5   For example the military mission "Concordia" in Macedonia (March 2003) including light armed military personnel of 350 or "Artemis" in the Democratic Republic of Congo (June 2003) including a combat force of 1800.

in much broader terms that go beyond the military-defence arena" (White, 2004: 50). "Such newer processes include interdependence and integration which are much less conflict-oriented and more geared towards cooperation between states and actors."(White, 2004: 50)

In other words, the development of ESDP is less than the 'hardening' of a previously civilian power, but much more than a mere operational inability to sufficiently project hard power elsewhere. Indeed, "'soft power', exercising influence through attraction as a model rather than through the use of force, does not exclude the acquisition of other forms of power and a security culture."(Nye, 2004).

The above indicates that in hard military security terms one cannot expect an increased EU role in the Gulf region any time soon (notwithstanding member state activities such as the French move to establish a military base in the United Arab Emirates) due to a lack of legal provisions and a real capacity for such action and also because strategic transatlantic convergence for such action is not in place: If the EU-NATO relationship was one of "some" transatlantic convergence (Aliboni, 2006: 35) then an increased EU participation in and support of NATO public diplomacy efforts in the Gulf region could be envisaged including agreements on military cooperation. NATO activities in the Gulf in this case could then be geared towards the creation of a cooperative security framework, eventually with a view to including regional powers such as Iran and Iraq. If however the current status quo prevails, which is marked by a recent consolidation in the EU-NATO relationship but without a full resolution of the transatlantic security debate (Cornish, 2005: 818), then the result will be "a kind of sluggish and, above all, uneven cooperation, based on voluntary performance and variable geometries. Transatlantic cooperation in the Gulf and the Middle East [will be] ultimately limited by strategic divergence - as well as by languishing US leadership." (Aliboni, 2006: 40)

As it is not the purpose of this article to speculate on the future development of EU-NATO relations and on NATO's possible role in security provision for the Gulf region, and as any unilateral or bilateral military security engagement by the EU in the Gulf can be excluded as an option for the time being, the continuation of this article will explore possibilities of how the EU can foster security in the Gulf that corresponds more with its soft power capabilities.

Two other approaches to security: structural diplomacy and security governance

Structural diplomacy

Security concepts are needed which take into account the full *structural* capacity of the EU. And this structural capacity goes beyond the intergovernmental pillar, it by far exceeds it. Where the intergovernmental pillar in terms of traditional external security projection and diplomacy may have limits which have been alluded to above, one has to see to which extent the European Union as a whole, with its other institutions and agencies, may in fact have become an actor in its own right, with tools at its disposal the effectiveness of which may defy traditional policy evaluations. Stephan Keukeleire argues that this structural foreign policy transcends the different pillars of the EU, is based on the various strategies and partnerships the EU has with other regions in the world and aimed at promoting structural long-term changes in these regions (2003: 31/32). When looking at the EU as a whole and using a wider view on diplomacy and foreign policy, a generally underestimated dimension of EU diplomacy comes to surface. In fact, one can observe a literal 'globalization' of the EU's external attention which previously had mainly focused on central Europe—a globalization that was and is largely managed by the first pillar, the EC, in terms of negotiation, supervision and administration of the various strategies and partnerships which the EU has developed for almost any region in the world (Keukeleire, 2003: 45). Furthermore, the multi-level and pluralistic nature of the EU as a diplomatic actor, seen as a whole, offers new concepts such as structural power, soft power

and the power of socialisation[6] - dimensions which normally refer to "the attractiveness of a state's ideology and ideas to other states, the capability to shape and determine the structures, rules, and institutions within which other states operate, and the capability to influence other states to the extent that they internalise the norms and values of the EU" (Keukeleire, 2003: 46).

Interest categories of the EU's strategies and partnerships vis-à-vis other regions (as opposed to national interests) are mainly milieu goals, other-regarding interests (where it is in the first place the interests of other states that are at stake, but where one's own state or region can derive indirect advantage), collective interests and farsighted self-interests. Typical of these mostly neglected categories of interests and objectives is that they mostly have a real impact in the long-term only, that they are less visible and therefore often underestimated and neglected by research and by the public (Keukeleire, 2003: 46). Nevertheless, strategies driven by such interest categories are "aimed at promoting a more favourable international environment by pursuing and supporting long-term structural changes, both in the internal situation of the countries concerned and in the inter-state relations and the general situation of these regions" (Keukeleire, 2003: 47).—They contribute to the prevention of threat situations and therefore to the *security* of all actors concerned. While the pursuit of such goals is more clearly recognizable in the EU's external activities in central and Eastern Europe (with particular regard to the Balkan), it also applies to the EU's approaches to other (neighbouring) regions - but with varying intensity. One could argue that the GCC is, as of yet, on the 'very low intensity' side of this spectrum given the broad absence of any operational cooperation activities (apart from regular consultation at different levels) that could have evolved from the existing EU-GCC Cooperation Agreement.

Nevertheless, the analysis of the EU in terms of structural diplomacy does open up a useful long term view on the EU's activities which play in the field of security as well.

Keukeleire's analysis is not far from Emil Kirchner who proposes to look at the EU's external action in terms of security governance.

Security governance

The rather narrow concept of a security community[7] here receives a theoretical extension by means of the concept of governance. Governance is a term that is often used rather generally to describe modern, decentralised and multi-actor forms of government. Governance introduces the concept of multi-level or multi-actor settings incorporating state and non-state organisations as well as public and private actors (Kirchner, 2006:948). EU governance in itself is multi-faceted, complex and difficult to be summarised by a single, simplifying concept.

The term security has over time evolved and, in particular in a post cold-war environment, the emphasis of the term has shifted and/or widened from territorial defence to threats external to the territory. "Within this, so-called milieu goals, conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction feature prominently, especially in the EU, which has stressed prevention rather than pre-emption and persuasion rather than coercion as its main security objective" (Kirchner, 2006: 949).

Security governance is therefore an "intentional system of rules that involves coordination, management and regulation of issues by multiple and separate authorities, interventions by both public

---

6   For a detailed account on socialization in Europe, see Schimmelfennig F., et al. 2006. *International Socialization in Europe,* New York: Palgrave.

7   The concept of Security Communities was pioneered by Karl Deutsch. See: Deutsch, K.W., Burrell, S.A. and Kann, R.A. 1957. *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience*, Princeton.

and private actors, formal and informal arrangements and purposefully directed towards particular policy outcomes" (Kirchner, 2006: 948)[8]

In view of its rather unique position in the world as a multi-level governance operator, "the EU represents a specific and novel form of security governance that has lessons and implications for other regions"; the "EU has co-ordinated, managed and regulated key security functions [such] as conflict prevention, peace-enforcement/peace-keeping and peace-building"(Kirchner, 2006: 948) with a special focus on the structure of governance and the process of governance.

The EU as a provider of security (governance): conflict prevention, peace-building and peace enforcement/peace-keeping

A conceptual extension of security within security governance also includes non-military threats, which does considerably enlarge the scope of EU responses to such threats as these can be pre-empted, attenuated or countered by conflict prevention measures or post-conflict peace-building efforts. Kirchner makes use of the following three security functions, two of which are non-military:

> Conflict prevention can be defined as situations in which major violent conflict can be avoided and implies an emphasis on financial and technical assistance; economic co-operation in the form of trade or association agreements, or enlargement provisions; nation-building and democratization efforts. Conflict prevention generally requires a long-term commitment.

> Peace-building is concerned with a post-conflict reconstruction and the re-establishment of peace, preferably on a permanent basis. These activities are usually of a medium-term nature.

> Peace enforcement/Peace keeping are both military dimensions including the potential engagement of troops in order to stop warring parties from quarrelling or to ensure the adherence to peace agreements.[9]

Kirchner finds that there has been a significant task expansion in all three security functions including "a noticeable movement from reactive to proactive engagement in EU security policy and a growing collective action pattern", in particular as far as capacity-building and problem solving are concerned.

More interestingly, though, Kirchner finds that among a host of key players in security action in the EU (Member States, European Commission, the Council of Ministers, the European Council, Council Presidency and the High Representative) there is "a sharing of power between Member States and EU institutions in the field of conflict prevention and peace-building, based on high levels of interaction between the main actors." *And in the domains of conflict prevention and peace-building it is "the European Commission which plays "a leading role"* (Kirchner, 2006: 962) in the coordination and management tasks. But beyond those two domains the Commission also plays a role in backing up peace enforcement and peace-keeping operations through its civilian expertise; it therefore also has a function in this rather military-dominated and intergovernmentally organized field.

While the EU's role as a security provider is indeed a fragmented one containing multi-level governance including a host of sub-structures such as committee networks and policy units at a lower level, it is important to note that particularly in the security functions *conflict prevention* and *peace-building* the European nation state is no longer the only legitimate provider of national and international security, but rather only one participant in a co-operative, multi-level system in which the European Commission plays a leading, and some say indispensable, role in the coordination and management of resources. Indeed, some even question whether EU member states that are conducting military missions, such as in Afghanistan (under the umbrella of NATO), have still the capacity to successfully conduct reconstruction measures in absence of the EU as an actor as such, given that "it is

---

8 Kirchner here modifies an older definition of security governance by Webber et al. 2004: 4

9 Variation by the author of van Tongeren P., et al. (eds.) 2002.Searching for Peace in Europe and Eurasia: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peace Building Activities, London: Lynne Rienner, cited in: Kirchner, 2006: 952

the EU as an institution, rather than its member states, that disposes of the bulk of European resources for reconstruction and development." (Dobbins, 2006: 25)

Implications for security co-operation with the Gulf region

The concept of security governance has helped to explain that in the domain of conflict prevention and peace-building the EU's coordination exercise between numerous actors functions well, and it is also in this domain where a clear interlocutor is visible: *the European Commission*. Post-war reconstruction efforts in Iraq, for example, are proactively administered by the European Commission which manages the bulk of European reconstruction aid.

Another conclusion to draw is however that EU security governance remains functionally separated and involves different actors according to the function exercised.

EU-GCC relations will therefore follow a very similar path which under current 'institutional' circumstances implies that the EU, understood as collective, community action, can by no means fulfil a role of a provider of "hard" military security in the Gulf region. But, and this is the essence of the previous section of this article, it has been elucidated by the theoretical diversions that security in a longer term perspective can best be promoted by using the array of tools available in the first pillar of the European Union which are administered by the European Commission (ideally in delegation and coordination with the member states' development and cooperation agencies). In this domain of 'soft' security, such as conflict prevention and all the cooperative measures and initiatives that this may entail, the EU, and here in particular the European Commission, has vast expertise to offer which could constitute a major building block in EU-GCC relations.

Removing obstacles to closer cooperation—practical aspects

The Regulatory framework for EU-GCC cooperation

Community action takes place using financing instruments for specific policies which are initiated by the European Commission and finally decided on by the European Council after taking into consideration the opinion of the European Parliament. Major policy frameworks in the domain of EU external relations have so far been the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (Barcelona Process), more recently the more comprehensive European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and specific co-operation programmes with OECD countries. A policy framework that would permit the financing of cooperation programmes with the GCC (and its Member States) has so far been missing. While the GCC finds some mention in the "EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East" initiative (Council, 2004), it does, so far, fit in none of the existing geographical policies of the Commission. The GCC also constitutes a novelty in the respect that it defies any policy instruments based on conditionality given its increasing levels of wealth.

The usual community action programmes which include the component of development assistance (as one form of an incentive mechanism) therefore make a distinction between a developed and a developing country using the OECD Development Assistance Committee's (DAC) classification of countries receiving official development assistance (ODA); for the GCC up until now there has been the complication of harmonizing standards to fit all the GCC countries into one scheme: while Oman remained in the category of developing countries, the other GCC members were already classified as developed which, under existing community financing frameworks would have made it impossible to develop a common instrument for the GCC: Oman might, for example have qualified for cooperation programmes specifically designed for developing countries, but none of the other GCC states would have. Yet, in turn programmes designed for cooperation with industrialised countries might have excluded the wealthier GCC states for a lack of matching the "industrialisation" criterion despite high per capita income.

For the Commission's financial perspectives 2007-2013 a consultation procedure took place on a *Thematic Programme for Co-operation with Industrialised Countries and Territories* (TPIC) under the future financial perspectives (COM, 2005). Taking into consideration the results of the TPIC consultation (which was closed by the end of 2005) the Commission has elaborated a new financing instrument which after consultation with the European Parliament was approved by the Council in December 2006 (Council, 2006).

As this financing instrument sets the financial margins for any future cooperation programmes between the EU and the GCC in those domains which fall into the responsibility of the European Commission, it merits further analysis in the following section.

The financing instrument (CIC)

When discussing EU-GCC relations some practical issues need to be taken into consideration, such as recent Community legislation which is going to affect and/or define the content and form of EU-GCC relations, at least from the European side for the next 6 years to come:

The Council Regulation (EC) No 1934/2006 of 21 December 2006 establishes a new financing instrument for 'Cooperation with Industrialised and other High-income Countries and Territories (CIC)' (Council, 2006).

As for the *primary objective* of such cooperation, it is to provide a specific response to the need to strengthen links and to engage further with them on a bilateral, regional or multilateral basis in order to create a more favourable environment for the development of the relations of the Community with these countries and territories and promote dialogue while fostering the Community's interest.

It is interesting to note in this respect that emphasis is repeatedly laid on the interests, even strategic interests, of the Community as opposed to a clearly defined zeal such as democracy promotion or development in general, which is only mentioned in the general principles section (Article 3, General principles - the European Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law and seeks to promote commitment to these principles in partner countries through dialogue and cooperation). In this sense article 3 also repeatedly states that the design and implementation of cooperation programmes within the CIC framework need to take account of the Community's specific interests, strategies and priorities. In this respect the term "specific" interest seems to have derived out of a compromise of the Commission's/council's original proposition "strategic" and the European Parliament's addition "own" interest, which would have watered down the domain somewhat.

Consistency of the EU's specific interests in the Gulf

On a European level there is an unprecedented dilemma, where desired norm transfer (which should include a medium-term conflict preventing perspective) needs to take place in a 'free-market' environment of competing international interests. Previously easily recognisable means of conditionality, be it through the offer of an accession perspective or through the provision of financial assistance, were employable in Europe's direct neighbourhood. This situation has now changed as the EU engages in dialogue with countries such as Russia, China or the GCC Member States which all experience increased levels of wealth. In particular with respect to the GCC states the EU finds itself in competition with the United States and increasingly so Asian countries when it comes to the provision of "consultative services" as how to best undertake institutional, public and private sector reforms which could eventually also increase security and foster integrative processes, and, not to forget, promote 'specific' national interests.

But surprisingly so the EU also faces competition from within: as the Commission is not the exclusive administrator of cooperation programmes and of course the financial provisions agreed on in

the financing instrument are not inclusive of national budgets for cooperation with the GCC (as we have seen, the Commission budget with respect to the GCC provided for in the financing instrument is actually very small)—indeed, (some) European member states remain at the same time very active in promoting their particular culture and ways in the region and/or use common history to further their own (economic) agendas.

This is not new. That multi-actor and multi-level action in EU affairs is not always taking place in the most coordinated and concerted manner, in particular when it comes to external relations (Gorenflo, 2004: 90) becomes evident in the opinion of the European Parliament (Parl, 2006) concerning some passages of the new financial instrument. The EP opinion includes an amended paragraph [Amendment 5, Recital 6a (new)] which states: "In implementing the Community's cooperation policy, greater complementarity and better harmonisation, alignment and coordination of procedures, both between the Community and its Member States and in relation with other actors, are essential to ensuring the consistency and effectiveness of cooperation." This suggested paragraph indeed points at a crucial aspect in European external relations but has not been included in the present regulation as passed by the Council. Attempts by the EP to address this issue in other parts of the regulation have also been unsuccessful. The voice for enhanced efforts of coordination are now only reflected in the regulation in a more pragmatic form, stating that "measures […] shall complement and bring added value to the efforts undertaken by Member States and Community public bodies, including in the area of commercial relations."

With respect to EU-GCC relations this illustrates that for EU activity's to be most successful in promoting long-term security in the region, a convergence of short and long-term interests and the coordination (or steering) of which still need to occur.

As for the *scope* of the regulation (Article 2), two points are noteworthy. First, the cooperation envisaged by the regulation concerns industrialised and other high-income countries and territories which share political, economic and institutional structures and values similar to those of the Community and which are important bilateral partners and players in multilateral fora and in global governance. From the list of eligible countries mentioned in an Annex to the regulation, it is relatively clear that countries like Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and also the United States fit this description.

Article 2 (1) however also sets out that such cooperation may also cover "newly industrialised or high-income countries and territories with which the Community has a strategic interest in promoting links". From the aforementioned list of countries, we can assume that this description rather fits the GCC member states as well as China, Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, Macao, Brunei, the Republic of Korea and Singapore.

It is further noticeable that the list of countries falling under the definition of this Council regulation is not definitive. The definition is drawn from OECD/DAC lists of developing countries and can be amended along the lines of the evolution of OECD/DAC assessments. Furthermore, and with particular relevance to the Gulf, "in duly justified circumstances and in order to foster regional cooperation, the Commission may decide when adopting action programmes […] that countries *not* [italic by author] listed in the Annex are eligible, where the project or programme to be implemented is of regional or cross-border nature." Finally, it is in the hand of the Commission to decide on the inclusion of specific countries qualifying this description unilaterally, with the mere obligation of informing the Council of its decision without even the requirement of hearing the Council's or the EP's opinion on this.

These provisions in article 2 are crucial as far as future EU-GCC relations are concerned as the present Council regulation does not only include *all* GCC member states as eligible for the enhanced cooperation within the CIC, but it leaves open the option to *extend* such cooperation to neighbouring countries of the GCC, and prospective future members, such as Yemen, which do not figure yet as

newly developed or high-income countries. The provisions however would also leave the door open for specific *pan-regional* cooperation programmes to include, depending on scope and strategy, Iraq or Iran.

Areas of cooperation are wide-ranging and comprise economic partnerships to stimulate bilateral trade as well as exchanges and dialogue between political, economic and social actors in the Community and the respective partner countries. Cooperation programmes may also cover cooperative projects in areas such as research, science and technology, energy, transport and environmental matters—including climate change, customs and financial issues and any other matter of mutual interest between the community and the partner countries.

It is also interesting to note that the criteria for *eligibility* for Community funding of annual or multi-annual action programmes within the CIC are set in a rather wide and inclusive fashion, ranging from partner states and respective vertically organised bodies to non-governmental organisations, civilian networks, research institutions, firms and other economic actors and individual agents—all provided that the objectives of the regulation are met.

The *financial provisions* for the implementation of the regulation for the period from 2007 to 2013 set a reference amount of EUR 172 million. In view of the 17 eligible (partner-) countries, this would leave an average of EUR 10.12 million per country for the given period, or roughly EUR 1.6 million per country and year. While of course the distribution of the reference amount per country will be according to certain priorities, this yearly average per GCC country gives nonetheless an indication of the *very limited financial resources* which will be available for enhanced EU-GCC cooperation along the lines of the provisions of the new regulation.

With such an operational financial framework in place, it is important to identify areas of activity for which such funds could be used. A rough guideline for this purpose may be the proceedings of the annual EU-GCC Joint Councils and Ministerial Meetings which will be examined below.

The 16th and 17th EU GCC Joint Councils: delineation of areas of enhanced co-operation

This section shall take a look at the outcome of the 16th EU-GCC Joint Council (COM, 2006) and Ministerial Meeting, held in Brussels in May 2006 and briefly compare it to the results of the recently held 17th EU-GCC Joint Council (COM, 2007). These Joint Councils take place annually and set the perspective and the pace in the development of EU-GCC relations.

The deliberations of the 16th EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting of 15 May 2006 in Brussels are summarised in a Joint Communiqué.

It goes somewhat further than previous communiqués as far as the future implementation of the co-operation agreement between the EU and the GCC is concerned: Concrete steps, namely the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding, are envisaged in the area of energy cooperation, but also in the field of education where the further development of the *Erasmus mundus* programme with a view to also include the GCC is also a concrete "ambition" of the two parties.

Closer cooperation could also take place in the areas of scientific exchange (within the realms of the Seventh EU Research Framework Programme (FP7)) and the environment, in particular climate change issues. It was agreed to pursue regular economic dialogue meetings and to promote cultural dialogue.

While the conclusion of the EU-GCC FTA is still pending, it appears that progress has been made and that, more importantly, advances in the implementation of the co-operation agreement do not seem to depend on prior conclusion of the FTA (despite the fact that a deepening of relations is not unrelated to the signature of such an agreement for political reasons). A causal relationship between a successful conclusion of the FTA seems to be more in place with respect to the implementation of the provisions relating to the GCC in the EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East. "6.1.5 Developments in relation to the EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the

Middle East […] Both parties agree that the conclusion of an EU-GCC Free Trade Agreement would provide a solid ground for strengthening the vital ties [between] the two regions."

The 17th Joint Council of May 2007 reiterates almost literally most of the points mentioned already. However, concerning EU-GCC relations, one notes that on the one hand sectoral meetings seem to be taking place or are planned at a slightly increased pace: the energy expert group has met, and expert meetings on climate change as well as economic dialogue meetings are to take place in 2007. Particularly noticeable is the "urgency" with which practical solutions for fostering academic exchanges are now called for. Another very noticeable change concerns the negotiations of the Free-Trade-Agreement: where the 16th Joint Council still attached importance to the finalisation of negotiations by the end of 2006, the 17th Joint Council only reiterates its commitment to such an agreement, without stating any timeline. In view of an apparent cool down of the dynamic for a quick conclusion of the Free-Trade-Agreement negotiations and the current unavailability of possibilities which such an Agreement would open for EU-GCC relations, other paths of cooperation will need to be explored in a number of the cooperation domains.

Resume

The 16th and 17th EU-GCC Joint Councils highlight a number of domains for future co-operation more clearly than it has been done in previous meetings. Moreover, the recent financial instrument for co-operation with industrialised and other high-income countries and territories provides, for the first time, a regulatory environment that allows for the development of co-operation programmes explicitly for the GCC Member States, but with the option to include, for specific projects, also Yemen and/or Iraq or Iran. While expectations have been high for enhanced co-operation in the past, it is now with this specific instrument in place that projects could actually be launched and financed under the direct auspices of the European Commission.

Such projects might include schemes to enhance cultural exchange between GCC countries and Europe, for example through education exchange programs such as Erasmus mundus, or by furthering scientific and technological cooperation, perhaps by developing public-private partnerships.

Conclusion and outlook

In the first part of this article the European role in a wider GCC security framework was discussed making the point that if such a security framework is understood as a hard one, including military engagement, the EU as an entity as such would not be in the institutional position to play a major role. Such a role, in the medium term, would have to be fulfilled by other (perhaps shifting) alliances. However, the conceptual enlargement of the security term as well as the analysis of the EU as an entity that is capable of exercising structural diplomacy (and hence has the capability to walk new paths in the area of security provision) has revealed that the EU has indeed the institutional capacity to play a role in the Gulf when it comes to ('soft') security.

While acknowledging a multitude of European foreign policy actors the use of Kirchner's concept of security governance has illustrated that it is the European Commission which traditionally would be in a strong position to pursue such a role. While projects might be inter-regional and involve exchanges between Europe and the Gulf, an enhanced role of the Commission and the EU in general could also be envisaged in providing some of its vast expertise by consulting the GCC countries with respect to some upcoming regional challenges such as in the domains of transport, energy grids, environmental cooperation or other areas which would increase cross-country mobility and exchanges throughout the Gulf region. This expertise would be part of the security function of conflict prevention through confidence-building. Transfers in knowledge of how to foster transformation using the example of Eastern enlargement might provide some useful guidance to the GCC countries on how to approach their direct neighbours. Of course, there can never be one-on-one transfer, but some of the

processes of confidence-building through sharing, pooling and exchange of knowledge and the lessons learned through institution-building might indeed, in their core structures, be applicable to the GCC as well.

In the final part of the article we have concluded that by now a financial instrument at the Commission's disposal will be able to deliver an enhancement in EU-GCC relations in the domains sketched out by the 16th and 17th EU-GCC Joint Councils. But the actual financial provisions for such cooperation remain very limited from the Commission-side, which can be justified by the "high-income" status of the GCC member states with per capita incomes partly exceeding the European average. In view of such limited financial means from the EU side, the development of exchange programs and other enhanced cooperation will probably require stronger commitment and engagement in soliciting such cooperation and a readiness to share cost from the GCC side. From the side of the EU an improved coordination (and also convergence) of its multi-level activities (and interests) in the GCC in order to better position itself as a credible and efficient service provider for best practice transfer seems absolutely essential. The issue complex of the EU-GCC FTA negotiations and their implication on further cooperation has been deliberately ignored as it is in too dynamic a stage to be used as a stable variable.

Lastly, attention shall be drawn on the fact that the complexity of the European governing process, which has been described above using the term governance, is quite different from the current set-up of the GCC and its member states. The European governance fabric includes a great number of NGOs and civil society actors and acting groups, universities, associations and the like which, one way or another, participate in or profit from Community funding of specific projects. As the Commission manages funds and aid it does however not implement cooperation projects itself but is reliant on local partners that solicit such funding, usually by strong employment of advocacy practices. To fully reap potential for co-operation it would therefore be important for actors and potential partners in the GCC to be aware of these complexities and to know their ways through a rather complex regulatory environment, also referred to as the 'Brussels bureaucracy'.

Bibliography

Aliboni, R. 2006. 'Europe's Role in the Gulf: A Transatlantic Perspective', *The International Spectator,* no. 2

Bailes, A. 2005. 'The European Security Strategy - An Evolutionary History', *SIPRI Policy Paper*, No. 10 of February.

Cornish, P. and Edwards, G. 2005. 'The strategic culture of the European Union: a progress report', *International Affairs*, 81, 4:801-820

Deutsch, K.W., Burrell, S.A. and Kann, R.A. 1957. *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience*, Princeton.

Dobbins, J. 2006, 'Friends again?' in: Zaborowski, M. (ed.), *Friends again? EU-US relations after the crisis*, Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies

(European) COMmission. 2005. Thematic programme for co-operation with industrialized countries and territories (TPIC) under the future Financial Perspectives. 3 August, COM (2005)324, available on: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/external_relations/consultations/tpic/issues_paper.pdf [accessed 20 May 2007]

(European) COMmission. 2006. Joint communiqué, 16th EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting, 15 May, CE-Golfe 3501/06.

(European) COMmission. 2007. Joint Communiqué, 17th GCC-EU Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting, 8 May, CE-Golfe 3501/07.

(European) Council. 1999. Conclusions of the Presidency, Annex III, 3-4 June, available on: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/kol2_en.htm#an3 [accessed 20 November 2007].

(European) Council, 2003. A secure Europe in a better world. European Security Strategy, 12 December, available on: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/78367.pdf [accessed 20 November 2007].

(European) Council, 2003. Declaration on EU military capabilities, 19-20 May, 9379/03 (Presse 138)

(European) Council.2004. Final report on an EU Strategic Partnership with the Mediterranean and the Middle East. June 2004, available on: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/Partnership%20Mediterranean%20and %20Middle%20East.pdf [accessed 20 November 2007]

(European) Council, 2006. Council Regulation establishing a financing instrument for cooperation with industrialised and other high-income countries and territories, 21 December, EC 1934/2006, OJ L405, 30 December .

(European) Parliament. 2006. EP legislative resolution on the draft Council Regulation establishing a financing instrument for cooperation with industrialised and other high-income countries and territories. 12 December, 11877/2006.

Financial Times, 2003. 'US arms talks test "realism" in EU relations, 24 June, cited in: Cornish, 2005: 812

Gorenflo, R. 2004. *La politique allemande en Méditerranée depuis la réunification – la nouvelle voie européenne,* unpublished Master thesis, Paris: Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne

Grgic, B. 2004. 'European Security Strategy: Why the Gulf looks to America', *International Herald Tribune,* 30 January, available on: http://www.iht.com/articles/2004/01/30/edborut_ed3_.php [accessed 20 November 2007]

Gulf Times. 2007. 'Interview with Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson', 28 February.

Keukeleire, S. 2003. 'The European Union as a Diplomatic Actor: Internal, Traditional, and Structural Diplomacy', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 14 (3), September, pp. 31-56

NATO, 2003. Berlin Plus agreement, 17 May, available on: http://www.nato.int/shape/news/2003/shape_eu/se030822a.htm [accessed 20 November 2007]

Nye, J. 2004.'Soft power: the means to success in world politics', *Public Affairs,* cited in: Cornish, 2005: 818.

Schimmelfennig, F. and Engert, S., et al. 2006. *International Socialization in Europe,* New York: Palgrave.

Stetter, S. 'Cross-pillar politics: functional unity and institutional fragmentation of EU foreign policies', *Journal of European Public Policy*, August 2004.

van Tongeren P., et al. (eds.) 2002.Searching for Peace in Europe and Eurasia: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peace Building Activities, London: Lynne Rienner

Webber, M., Croft S., et al. 200. 'The Governance of European Security', *Review of International Studies,* 30 (1), pp. 3-26

White, B. 2004. 'Foreign policy analysis and European foreign policy' in: Tonra, B. and Christiansen, T. (eds.) 2004. *Rethinking European Union Foreign Policy*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

René Daniel Gorenflo
European Politics Research Group
Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS)
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich - ETHZ
rene.gorenflo@eup.gess.ethz.ch