

Autonomous Weapon Systems, *Quo Vadis?*

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Published: April 10, 2019



Abstract

This paper examines the implications arising from states' use of autonomous weapon systems in situations of conflict. The analysis starts by addressing the definitional problems found in the literature on autonomous weapon systems. The primary finding is that the differential feature of autonomous weapon systems is their ability to select among targets and decide to kill without human oversight. The paper then delves into the effect that the increasing use of autonomous weapon systems has on conflict and war and the resulting policy implications for states and the international community as a whole. I conclude by discussing the legal, ethical, and moral implications of the use of weapons that can kill autonomously, which are at the core of the debate.

Keywords: autonomous weapon systems, unmanned weapons, foreign policy, law of armed conflicts.

1. Introduction

We find ourselves in a time in which the rapid advances of technology profoundly affect, if not completely revolutionize, how the world operates. From the rise of cyberterrorism to the effects of social media on democracy, international relations have not remained unscathed. Even so, the most Terminator-like concern has been one raised in the last decade: the creation of *killer robots*¹. What could have well been the plot of a science-fiction movie is now the concern of academics and policy-makers alike.

The revolutionary effect of autonomous weapons systems on warfare and state relations has been likened to that of gunpowder, computers, and even electricity.² In the face of such sensationalism, we must ask ourselves: why are autonomous weapons set to change the world as we know it? More importantly, how do we ensure that we are two steps ahead of these *killer robots*?

This paper will answer these questions by addressing the following issues. First, in an aim to bring clarity to what autonomous weapon systems are, I will address the definitional problems found in the literature on autonomous weapon systems. More specifically, I will analyze the notion of "autonomy" and where different stakeholders draw the line of autonomy. Second, this paper will address the policy implications of autonomous weapon systems. Finally, I will address the ethical, legal and moral concerns

raised in the public debate on autonomous weapon systems.

2. Autonomous Weapon Systems: What is in a name?

The advent of autonomous weapon systems has been given much momentum in public policy and has been closely anticipated and monitored. Part of the reason for this is the widespread belief that these *killer robots* are unique and revolutionary. If this is the case, we must ask ourselves why that is. What exactly makes these weapons so different from their predecessors? It would seem that the answer lies in their "autonomy."

1. Existing definitions

The United States Department of Defense has defined autonomous weapon systems as systems that *"once activated, can select and engage targets without further intervention by a human operator. This includes human-supervised autonomous weapon systems that are designed to allow human operators to override operation of the weapon system, but can select and engage targets without further human input after activation."*³

Conversely, semi-autonomous weapon systems as systems that *"once activated, [are] intended to only engage individual targets or specific target groups that have been selected by a human operator."*⁴ The main point is that *"human control is retained over the decision to select individual*

¹ Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

² Naval Research Committee: Autonomous and Unmanned Systems in the Department of the Navy

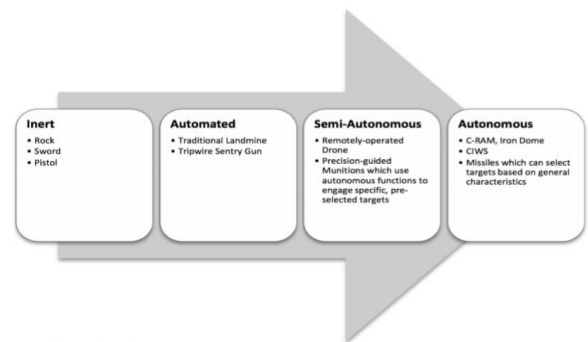
³ D United States, Department of Defense, Executive Service Directorate. "Department of Defense Directive 3000.09" Department of Defense Directive , ser. 3000.09, 2012.

⁴ *Ibid.*

*targets and specific target groups for engagement.*⁵

Some scholars⁶ have rightly pointed out that, in an abstract sense, weapons such as landmines could qualify as autonomous weapon systems under that definition, as they are triggered without a human operator. In other words, there is no human oversight over who the target is. Given this ambiguity, it has been necessary to narrow the function of “select” to “select among” targets. Under this development, “selection among” would entail that there is “a machine-generated targeting decision made; some form of computational cognition, meaning some form of AI or logical reasoning, is inherently part of autonomous weapon systems in the contemporary debate.”⁷ Consequently, autonomous weapon systems would possess “some decisional capability to ‘select’ and ‘engage.’”

Figure 1⁸



2. Drawing at the line at “autonomy”

According to these definitions, it would seem that the line of “autonomy” is drawn at the decision-making level and more specifically at the selection of targets. This distinction has been corroborated by the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has defined autonomous weapons systems as “any weapon system with autonomy in its critical functions—that is, a weapon system that can select (search for, detect, identify, track or select) and attack (use force against, neutralize, damage or destroy) targets without human intervention.”⁹

Alternatively, some authors¹⁰ have argued that a dichotomous division is not reflective of the practical reality of these weapons. Instead, the level of autonomy of different weapon systems will depend on the interactions between human operators and machine functions and should be

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Anderson, Kenneth, and Matthew C. Waxman. "Debating Autonomous Weapon Systems, their Ethics, and their Regulation under international law." (2017).

⁷ Anderson, Kenneth, and Matthew C. Waxman. "Debating Autonomous Weapon Systems, their Ethics, and their Regulation under international law." (2017).

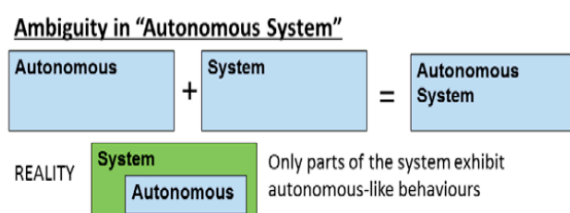
⁸ Figure 1: Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

⁹ Davison, Neil. "A legal perspective: Autonomous weapon systems under international humanitarian law." *Perspectives on lethal autonomous weapon systems* (2017): 5-18.

¹⁰ Anderson, Kenneth, and Matthew C. Waxman. "Debating Autonomous Weapon Systems, their Ethics, and their Regulation under international law." (2017).

assessed on a case-by-case basis. Others¹¹ have posited that the term “autonomous systems” creates confusion and ambiguity, as it clusters together systems that are fundamentally different by using “autonomy” as their main label over and above all of other features and capabilities.¹² These scholars have proposed to use an alternative nomenclature for these systems: “autonomous function in a system”.

Figure 2¹³



While there may be divergence in the literature regarding the definition and the nomenclature given to autonomous weapon systems, consensus can be found on the fact that ahead of us lie increases in levels of autonomy and decreases in levels of human intervention until the human role is negligibly small. In all likelihood, human intervention will be limited to activating the weapons.¹⁴

3. Policy Implications

One of the concerns raised by political scientists and policymakers is how the advent of autonomous weapon systems will impact the likelihood of conflict and war. The main argument here is that the development and use of lethal weapons that “pose little risk to the lives of the operators removes a potent deterrent for armed conflict”¹⁵ and will consequently “revolutionize warfare.”¹⁶ This revolution would come, on the one hand, from the decrease in the operational cost of war and would therefore “democratize” warfare by increasing the military capabilities of smaller states¹⁷ and, on the other hand, from the disappearance of the transaction cost that comes with sending troops to combat. The latter effectively de-politicizes the question of whether to go to war, as it stops being a high-cost issue for the constituency or a polarizing issue in public opinion. In other words, the concern is: what will warfare look like once it no longer is an issue of public debate?

The first implication, namely that of the “democratization” of warfare, could have profound implications for the global balance of power, similar but not to the extent of that of nuclear weapons. Additionally, many policy papers^{18,19} have warned against the effects that these weapons would have on global terrorism.

¹¹ Williams, Andrew. "Defining Autonomy in Systems: Challenges and Solutions." *Issues for Defence Policymakers*(2015): 27.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Figure 2.3: Williams, Andrew. "Defining Autonomy in Systems: Challenges and Solutions." *Issues for Defence Policymakers*(2015): 27.

¹⁴ United States, Department of Defense, Executive Service Directorate. "Department of Defense Directive 3000.09" Department of Defense Directive , ser. 3000.09, 2012.

¹⁵ Scott, Ben, Stefan Heumann, and Philippe Lorenz. "Artificial Intelligence and Foreign Policy." *Stiftung Neue Verantwortung Policy Brief* (2018).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Artificial Intelligence and National Security Greg Allen Taniel Chan A study on behalf of Dr. Jason Matheny, Director of the U.S. Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA)

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Williams, Andrew. "Defining Autonomy in Systems: Challenges and Solutions." *Issues for Defence Policymakers*(2015): 27.

Some even contend that “a new arms race appears inevitable alongside a new set of dangers from terrorism.”²⁰

In the face of such possibilities, many have called for a complete ban of autonomous weapon systems. In fact, in 2015, an open letter signed by over three thousand leading AI researchers was presented at the International Joint Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Buenos Aires, Argentina, calling for a ban on offensive autonomous weapons. Other experts have taken more strategic approaches²¹ and have set out strategy plans to ensure their state’s superiority in the field. Others prefer a more *laissez-faire* approach by claiming that, because autonomous are already being used lawfully today, international law already regulates their creation, development, and use.

When it comes to ensuring a successful ban, Rebecca Crootof, expert on autonomous weapon systems and author of “Killer Robots”, has identified the different factors that have led to the ban of previous weapons and contends that at least one of these need to apply to ensure the practical and successful ban of any type of weapon system²²: weapons causing superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering, inherently indiscriminate weapons, ineffective weapons, other existing means for accomplishing the same military objective, clear and narrowly tailored prohibitions, prior regulation, public concern and civil society engagement, and sufficient state

²⁰ Scott, Ben, Stefan Heumann, and Philippe Lorenz. "Artificial Intelligence and Foreign Policy." *Stiftung Neue Verantwortung Policy Brief* (2018).

²¹ Artificial Intelligence and National Security Greg Allen Taniel Chan A study on behalf of Dr. Jason Matheny, Director of the U.S. Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Activity (IARPA)

²² Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

commitment. Crootof claims that the only factor applicable to the ban of autonomous weapon systems is “public concern and civil society engagement”, particularly because: (i) states already use autonomous weapon systems, and (ii) the most common concerns (which will be addressed later in this paper) are framed in ethical, legal or moral terms. Crootof draws the parallel with the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions which has been attributed mainly to the participation of nongovernmental organizations and other civil society representatives.²³

4. Other considerations

The debate about autonomous weapon systems, which has spread to the realm of public opinion, has been framed in ethical, legal, and moral terms. Is it ethical for us to allow machines to decide on whom to target?²⁴ Are autonomous weapon systems in breach of the distinction principle of international humanitarian law?²⁵ These are the questions that one can find in the literature on autonomous weapon systems. This paper will continue by addressing the implications arising from such concerns.

1. Ethical, legal, and moral considerations

Regarding the ethical, legal, and political dilemmas that autonomous weapon systems seem to pose for a number of scholars, this paper will address the following ones: (i) do autonomous weapon systems currently fulfill the requirements of the law of armed conflicts in international

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

²⁵ Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

humanitarian law to be lawfully used, and if not, will they ever?, (ii) do autonomous weapon systems hinder or impede accountability in armed conflicts?, and most importantly, (iii) do human beings have the moral monopoly on killing?

Many scholars^{26,27} have addressed the common and popular claim that autonomous weapon systems will never be able to comply with the law of armed conflict. I will proceed by deconstructing this claim.

First and foremost, it would seem that it rests on assumptions about how technology, artificial intelligence and weaponry will evolve in the future, and that is in a way that will never fulfill the set of requirements imposed by international humanitarian law. It is true that that machines and weapon systems may never develop moral and ethical values. However, this should not give way to skeptical and unfounded assumptions on technological evolution. Instead, it should incentivize engineers, policy makers, and legal authorities alike to develop ways to circumvent this issue.

Second, it rests on assumptions on how international humanitarian law will evolve and, specifically, on its lack of flexibility. While it is true that many of the principles that are the backbone of international humanitarian law today have been in use for decades, if not centuries, the law has also proven to be flexible enough to address the emerging issues it has been faced with with time. If the law remains static while reality is in constant motion and evolution, we will find ourselves operating within an obsolete and

²⁶ Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

²⁷ Anderson, Kenneth, and Matthew C. Waxman. "Debating Autonomous Weapon Systems, their Ethics, and their Regulation under international law." (2017).

outdated framework. Moreover, an interesting reality that has been pointed out is that autonomous weapon systems are currently being employed lawfully, proving that they are not inherently unlawful.²⁸

Within this broader legal debate, much attention has been paid to the principle of distinction, namely the legal precept that differentiates between "military objectives and civilian objects, combatants and civilians, and active combatants and those hors de combat."²⁹ Military commanders and actors in conflict must abide by this principle, and by extension, so must autonomous weapon systems. On the one hand, most scholars and experts agree that autonomous weapon systems are incapable of distinguishing between combatants and civilians³⁰, thus rendering them unlawful under the distinction principle. On the other hand, some have raised doubts about the ability of humans to make such distinctions, especially in the fog of war. The difference, it would seem, between an autonomous legal system and a human commander, both of which do not abide by the distinction principle is that the human commander can be held accountable for a breach of international humanitarian law, while a machine cannot.

This takes us to our second concern, and that is whether the use of autonomous weapon systems could hinder accountability in the realm of armed conflict. The International Committee of the Red Cross has been very categorical in its view on this

²⁸ Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

²⁹ Davison, Neil. "A legal perspective: Autonomous weapon systems under international humanitarian law." *Perspectives on lethal autonomous weapon systems* (2017): 5-18.

³⁰ Crootof, Rebecca. "The killer robots are here: legal and policy implications." *Cardozo L. Rev.* 36 (2014): 1837.

issue and has stated that “all obligations under international law and accountability for them cannot be transferred to a machine, computer program or weapon system.”³¹ Consequently, these weapons “should be banned because machine decision-making undermines, or even removes, the possibility of holding anyone accountable in the way and to the extent that, for example, an individual human soldier might be held accountable for unlawful or even criminal actions.”³² This argument relies on the weight that individual criminal responsibility has on international law. While the importance of the emergence of individual criminal responsibility in the last half-century and the impact and contribution of its institutions (the International Criminal Court, the Nuremberg trials, the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, etc) are undeniable, it is also true that the “effective adherence to the law of armed conflict traditionally has come about through mechanisms of state (or armed party) responsibility.”³³ Thus, the use of autonomous weapon systems would not impede the establishment of criminal responsibility for the party that has unlawfully deployed them.

The last and perhaps most important question is, put in simple terms, whether machines can morally decide to kill. This question is vested on the underlying premise that human beings have

the monopoly on morality, and by extension, moral killing. Human beings have decided what is moral throughout time and space. More recently, social psychology has introduced the idea of “framing” as the way in which public opinion, and by extension, common notions of morality and ethics are framed. Consequently, we find that the initial question becomes obsolete, it is no longer an issue of whether machines are morally able to kill, but instead, whether machines can kill within the framework of morality created by human beings at a certain point in time and space.

The American roboticist Ronald C. Arkin has addressed this issue by developing the eponymous Arkin test, under which “an unmanned platform fulfills the demands of law and morality (and may therefore be permissibly employed) when it can be shown to comply with legal and moral requirements and constraints as well or better than a human under similar circumstances”³⁴. It seems that, nowadays, no machine passes the Arkin test. Currently, the largest effort to reproduce human conscience in a machine is in “strong AI”, which would replicate human decision-making processes and capabilities in machines. This raises the question, is this a good thing?

The premise behind the arguments in favor of “strong AI” and the Arkin test is that because human beings *can* act morally, they *do* act morally. Furthermore, it harbours the idea that these human capabilities somehow render decisions safer or more reliable, thus completely removing human failings and error out of the equation. This assumption ignores the flip side of the coin, which is that any notion of morality inherently carries with it notions of immorality. In other words, if human beings can be moral, they can also be immoral and act immorally. Machines,

³¹ Davison, Neil. "A legal perspective: Autonomous weapon systems under international humanitarian law." *Perspectives on lethal autonomous weapon systems* (2017): 5-18.

³² Anderson, Kenneth, and Matthew C. Waxman. "Debating Autonomous Weapon Systems, their Ethics, and their Regulation under international law." (2017).

³³ Anderson, Kenneth, and Matthew C. Waxman. "Debating Autonomous Weapon Systems, their Ethics, and their Regulation under international law." (2017).

³⁴ Lucas Jr, George R. "Automated Warfare." *Stan. L. & Pol'y Rev.* 25 (2014): 317

on the other hand, act and operate outside of the framework of morality. They, like animals, are *amoral*. So far, the amorality of machines has been implicitly equated to the immorality of humans, but these are profoundly distinct. As some scholars have pointed out, the fact that machines do not pass the Arkin test and may never pass the Arkin test gives us the reassurance that unmanned systems could not emulate any undesirable human reactions³⁵, which until now have been behind all military catastrophes. This is because machines “do not care, they have no interests, intentions, or self-regard, they harbor no ambitions or hatred, and they are utterly incapable of the “interiority” characteristic of self-consciousness.”³⁶ And so, we reach the conclusion that not only is it impossible for robots to be human, but that neither would we wish them to be.

5. Conclusion

Autonomous weapon systems have made headlines in the last decades causing equal amounts of outrage and praise among civil society and in academic debate. This is mainly due to their differential feature: autonomy. *Mutatis mutandis*, autonomous weapon systems have the ability to select among targets and decide to kill without any human intervention or oversight.

The arguments against the use of autonomous weapon systems are political, legal, and moral. Politically, it would seem that these weapons may incentivize states and non-state actors, such as terrorist groups, to turn to armed conflict. Legally, the lack of human oversight over decisive actions in conflict may impede the establishment of individual criminal responsibility. Morally, it would

seem that giving machines the power to decide on the life of a human being is wrong.

Proponents, on the other hand, refute these arguments and find that autonomous weapon systems may make conflict less costly and more efficient. Politically, the deployment of troops and the loss of casualties is reduced or even eliminated. Legally, the use of autonomous weapon systems does not affect the establishment of criminal responsibility of each party in armed conflict. Finally, morally, autonomous weapon systems substitute human emotions and interests by algorithms and lines of code, thus eliminating human error from the decision to kill. Outside of this debate, the reality is that states currently deploy autonomous weapon systems in combat. Civil society, however, remains strongly against their use and calls for a complete ban of these weapons. Only time will tell whether the people’s voices will be loud enough to be heard.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*

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Is the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) adequately designed to respond to current global challenges?

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Published April 10, 2019

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
IE International
Policy Review



Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the design of the European (EU) challenges. The analysis starts with an examination of the powers given to the CFSP through the Treaty on the European Union and Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. The primary finding is that the CFSP decision-making is not autonomous and that the CFSP is often limited in what it can do as it might interfere with the exclusive powers of other institutions. The success of the CFSP is determined by the willingness of EU Member States making it work. The political will is key. The Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) has been the most exciting outcome of the CFSP and serves a complementary feature to NATO, which it is unlikely to replace. The CFSP is promising and has delivered some 'triumphs' such as the Iran Nuclear Deal or post-Crimea sanctions on Russia, however based on the analysis in this paper, as currently designed the CFSP is insufficient at implementing the EU's foreign policy. However, it is adequately designed in formulating foreign policy and moving agendas forward. This all comes at a time where the changing international political dynamics, especially with emerging new challenges and changes in relations with major powers, may put the EU at center stage of international relations.

Keywords: European Union, Common Foreign and Security Policy, CFSP

Introduction

On the 9th of November 2018, Bruno Le Maire the French Minister of Economy and Finance, stated that “it’s now that things are being played out, and the decisions we take now must enable us to affirm Europe as an empire with the size and power of China or the United States but with totally different goals.”¹ Le Maire, additionally defined a time frame, saying that “Europe has got to assert itself as a peaceful empire in the next 25 years.” This was not the first time that the European Union (EU) had been experimenting with the idea of becoming an empire. Jose Manuel Barroso, former President of the European Commission, famously compared the European Union to a “non-imperial empire,” much to the outrage of Euro-sceptics. The imperialist rhetoric regarding the EU’s global ambitions emanating mostly from France raises the question of whether the European Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) institutions are adequately designed to respond to current global challenges. There is substantial writing on the CFSP and Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP), since the European Union Global Strategy (EUGS) and its follow-ups have entailed much deliberation on the goals and future of the CFSP, however the results of this deliberation have failed to deliver an implementable strategy. The research in this article contributes to the already extensive literature on the EU’s foreign, external, and defense policies and reflect on whether these policies are adequately designed to respond to contemporary global challenges such as counterinsurgency, terrorism and the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), the migration crisis, the potential creation of an EU army and shifting relations with the main foreign powers in the world today USA, Russia, and China.

Design of the CFSP

CFSP’s current policy goals are best understood through a close reading of the European Union

Treaties.² Firstly, Article 3(5) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) states:

“In its relations with the wider world, the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests and contribute to the protection of its citizens. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter.” (Article 3(5), TEU).

This article provides a general framework of CFSP - CFSP defining that its main goals should include the defense of European peace and security and the protection of EU citizens. This integration of CFSP into the TEU is notable as “after the Lisbon Treaty, the CFSP remains ‘distinct’ from the general, former ‘Community Logic’. Most importantly, the CFSP (and CSDP) are the only substantive policy domains found in the TEU, whereas other policies are found in the [Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union] TFEU.”³ Since the Maastricht Treaty, the EU is now closer to the ‘Community Logic’ as there now is only one Union and not different institutional pillars.

Article 24(1) of TEU outlines the competences of CFSP, which shall “cover all areas of foreign policy and all questions relating to the Union’s security, including the progressive framing of a common defense policy that might lead to a common defense.” However, it also delineates the limits of CFSP’s scope, stating that “[t]he common foreign and security policy is subject to specific rules and procedures. It shall be defined and implemented by the European Council, and the Council acting

unanimously, except where the Treaties provide otherwise." The CFSP is subject to important limitations, and EU Member States have been reluctant to transfer competencies to the CFSP, choosing instead to be in control of it. Therefore, it is difficult to establish what the CFSP can actually do.⁴ Furthermore, the TFEU establishes in Article 2(4) that "[t]he Union shall have competence, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty on European Union, to define and implement a common foreign and security policy." This attests to the fact that the CFSP is part of the Union's overall legal framework, rather than the outcome of cooperative intergovernmental proceedings. However, this still contrasts with TFEU Articles 3-6 that establish which areas have "exclusive competences, shared competences or supporting, coordinating or supplementing competences. It would probably come closest to the field of complementary competence."⁵ Legally the CFSP requires that EU Member States and the Union's institutions coordinate, which is politically desirable. A further check for member nation-state competences is that the European Court of Justice has limited jurisdiction on CFSP matters.⁶

It could be argued that the CFSP is the outcome of a natural evolution considering the historical context in which European cooperation emerged. On September 19, 1946 Winston Churchill famously proclaimed that Europe should develop into a sort of "United States of Europe". If the EU project is to be seen as a peace project in a continent that has experienced countless wars, it is to be expected that a unified foreign, security, and defense policy framework should be established, dampening tensions between member states. In 1952, the Treaty Establishing the European Defense Community attempted to create a European Defense Community (EDC), a pan-European army. This attempt came from the Pleven Plan. René Pleven was a French Politician

who proposed a unified European army, and to whom some attribute the creation of NATO.⁷ Ultimately, the EDC was not successful due to the reluctance of France and Italy; if a 27-country (26 if the UK leaves the union) European army were to be realized today, it would have to pass the same political obstacles that the then six countries failed to overcome.

The General Provisions of the CFSP are found under Title V Chapter 2 in the TEU. Article 77 outlines some of these provisions, such as the "monitoring of external borders" (Article 77(1)). Due to the scope established in 24(1) of the TEU, the CFSP theoretically covers all areas of foreign policy. The policy is often an interconnected field, requiring cooperation across different policy areas; e.g., environmental and trade policies are interlinked.⁸ However, with the separate legal basis for the CFSP, compared to other policy areas established separately in the TFEU, policy coordination becomes complicated. Lastly, Article 40 of the TEU establishes the limits of what the CFSP can do individually:

"The implementation of the common foreign and security policy shall not affect the application of the procedures and the extent of the powers of the institutions laid down by the Treaties for the exercise of the Union competences referred to in Articles 3 to 6 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Similarly, the implementation of the policies listed in those Articles shall not affect the application of the procedures and the extent of the powers of the institutions laid down by the Treaties for the exercise of the Union competences under this Chapter." (Article 40 TEU).

This establishes that the CFSP decisions can be adopted only if they do not interfere with the

exclusive powers of the Union's institutions, established by the TFEU. An example of this limitation would be a policy restricting the import of commodities that have potential military applications.⁹

CFSP decision-making is not autonomous, many institutional actors are involved. The European Council has a leading role in the formulation of the CFSP (Article 22 TEU, Article 26 TEU, Article 15(6) TEU) although its role is indirect by setting the strategic interests of the CFSP.¹⁰ Additionally, there is The Council of the EU which "can be regarded as the main CFSP decision-making institution."¹¹ Article 26(2) of the TEU outlines that the Council shall frame the CFSP and take decisions based on the strategic guidelines provided by the European Council. Articles 28 and 29 of the TEU further develop this. The Council also decides on voting procedures. The High Representative and the European External Action Service (EEAS), as outlined by Articles 27 and 30(1) of the TEU must chair the CFSP. In this case there is a need for coordination as the High Representative is the Vice President of the Commission. The European Commission can influence the CFSP through its negotiations with the Council; however, it is not directly involved in the implementation of decisions.¹² The European Parliament is often seen as the most democratic institution of the EU. In relation to CFSP, outlined by Article 36 of the TEU, the High Representative can consult the European Parliament and consider its views in the formulation of CFSP.¹³ The European Parliament has oversight over the CFSP, as it approves its budget. Given that all these parties are involved in the functioning of the CFSP, the quality of its decision-making, and therefore its adequacy can be said to be externally derived. In sum, the practical implications of all the institutional complexity described is that it is a constraint for the CFSP as it must go through multiple levels of

decision-making, immensely slowing down the speed of any implementation and shows a lack of clarity of who creates and is ultimately responsible for the CFSP.

Analysis and Discussion

In the "Special Report: Future of Europe", the Economist wrote that "Russia led by a newly belligerent Vladimir Putin, Turkey under an increasingly distant Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the Middle East a more violent mess than ever, Britain preparing to leave the EU and an apparently more isolationist America, it is no longer enough. The union clearly needs to focus more on strengthening its common foreign and security policy (CFSP)."¹⁴ The CFSP has seen recent success, most notably through the EEAS's work to secure the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Iran Nuclear Deal) and placing sanctions on Russia, after the 2014 Crimea Invasion. The most pressing issues for CFSP are how to deal with future crises. These crises may come primarily in three forms: foreign aggression (both military or digital), mass movement of people (e.g., due to a refugee crisis), or a decline in current inter-governmental institutions and their cooperative framework (such as NATO). To best address these issues, this paper argues that the EU should develop the CFSP framework further, as it has with the development of deployment forces. Furthermore, the new institutions should try to the best of their capabilities to complement existing structures, such as NATO. This assumes that in the long run, the US will remain a staunch ally to Europe as it is in both of their strategic interests. This is most notably seen in the expansion of NATO from a military alliance to a "Security Community"¹⁵ which symbolized a change from merely being a military alliance, to a strategic cooperation with shared values.

The success of the CFSP will be determined by the willingness of EU Member States to make it work.¹⁶ This comes at a time when member states have experienced an influx of immigrants and rising electoral support for populist and Euro-skeptic parties during elections, such as UKIP for the UK, AFD for Germany, Front National in France, and so on. Discourse in Europe now emphasizes the loss of sovereignty to the EU. However, despite this, there are some positive signs, most notably the good intentions and forceful statements emanating from Germany and France.

Chancellor Merkel of Germany and President Macron of France have both called for the creation of an EU army to complement NATO.¹⁷ Merkel has stated that the EU Army would complement NATO rather than oppose it and that the member states, would not be able to easily integrate their military and defense capabilities due to prevailing disparities, such as different weapon systems. In light of the European Migration Crisis, the discourse of US President Trump, the abandonment of the INF Nuclear Arms Treaty by Russia and the US, tensions with NATO exemplified by recent conferences and the current political enthusiasm for European common defense, it seems more likely than ever before that European defense capabilities will expand. However, this expansion will not replace the security cooperation offered by NATO in the near future.

In 2018, the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), became part of the EU's security and defense policy. NATO's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, has publicly welcomed the formation of PESCO and has stressed the possible complementary nature of PESCO with NATO.¹⁸ Of the 25 Members¹⁹ of PESCO, 23 are members of NATO. Stoltenberg also stated that "military mobility can be the flagship of NATO-EU cooperation, which is being stepped up."²⁰ This also raises the question of the practical and

strategic feasibility of having an increasingly autonomous EU defense from NATO. As it stands currently, this is unlikely to occur. The reasons for this are that NATO already exists with its comprehensive structure, decision-making in NATO, and structural capabilities such as command lines already exist in NATO. However, EU security policy will must also focus on non-traditional security challenges described in this paper. The likely mechanism that PESCO will have is the ability of rapid deployment of security forces in cases of crisis. This measure is consistent with the recent challenges the EU has experienced. In the case of another migrant crisis or economic and political collapses of countries in the EU Neighborhood Policy (ENP), the mobility of PESCO gives the EU a rapid response mechanism. Furthermore, this is aligned with the Helsinki 'Headline Goal 2010' of establishing 'battlegroups', which gives "the ability for the EU to deploy force packages at high readiness as a response to a crisis either as a stand-alone force or as part of a larger operation enabling follow-on phases."²¹ However, the battlegroup concept is currently under revision and no battlegroup has ever been operative. "The ambition of the EU is to be able to take a decision to launch an operation within five days of the approval of the so-called Crisis Management Concept by the Council"²² If the battlegroups are sufficiently developed, this would add significantly to the adequacy of the CFSP and better allow them to respond to current and future security challenges.

The CFSP would have to deal with many other prominent issues, one of which would be counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism. The Battle of Baghuz Fawqani, saw ISIL losing its last controlled territory. However, home-grown terrorism and the resurgence of terrorist groups will likely remain a threat to the EU in the near future. In the Mediterranean, under CFSP policy, attempts to

reduce piracy have been made with efforts focusing on offshore Somalia. The CFSP will need to work across other areas, in order to meet its goals and not violate other EU institutions' jurisdiction. An additional concern is that climate change could be a potential security threat and has already become an important external affairs issue. There is a vast array of other emergent issues that also need to be addressed by the CFSP. To name a few: trade, the environment, the internet, and migration. As these issues are covered by different EU institutions, it becomes difficult for the CFSP to adequately address them.

Given the likely departure of Britain from the EU, the post-Brexit structure of the CFSP will be crucial, as it means the EU will lose one of its most important countries in terms of economics, military size and capabilities, nuclear power, and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. However, the UK is also one of the few countries that makes consensus difficult, and sometimes impossible within the CSDP. Member States have also experienced alleged Russian interference in elections and governance, and PESCO includes projects related to cybersecurity.²³ PESCO is part of the European Defense Agency (EDA), which is part of the CFSP.²⁴ The EEAS executes the policies established by the CFSP. Although the CFSP is limited, as shown earlier in this paper, through political cooperation new agencies can be created that support the development and implementation of CFSP. One conclusion one could draw from this is that CFSP is not adequately designed to implement foreign policy unilaterally. Giving the CFSP more power would require changes to the Lisbon Treaty, which is unlikely to occur.

Conclusion

As presently designed, the CFSP is insufficient at implementing the EU's foreign policy, however, it is adequate in formulating foreign policy and

moving agendas forward. Given new institutions that can develop a mandate for a CFSP, e.g., through PESCO or other institutions, the CFSP could respond to the current and future challenges of the EU. However, it is reliant on cooperation between the Member States and their political will, to be effective. The vague nature of the language on the competencies of the CFSP, highlight that it is not there to replace national foreign policies of Member States, but rather to be an instrument that promotes the general interests of all states and that can be used to respond to crises that affect the Union as a whole. The only way for the CFSP to make decisions is on the basis of unanimity with the exception of the issues defined in PESCO. When there is a consensus in the Union, the CFSP becomes powerful and can deliver strong foreign policy results, such as the Iran Deal or sanctions on Russia. In future migrant crises, it is possible that the deployment force created by the CFSP will be used, although a debate on the utility of such an action should be initiated. The future challenges of rising tensions with Russia, instability in ENP countries such as Algeria, the friction created by Erdogan in Turkey, current and future conflicts in the Middle East, and possible decline of NATO and the US alliance; can be addressed but not solved by the CFSP. However, with PESCO and continued developments, it is possible that the CFSP can play an important future role, in a way that it has not been able to do before now. The reason for this could be a stronger consensus in the EU after Brexit, and out of necessity to fulfill security objectives and maintain balance of power. However, this would require more transfer of power to the CFSP so that it can go beyond the present design constraints so it can be more effective than it has been thus far.

There are broader implications to consider here. The post-cold war international relations structure can be said to have shifted towards a multipolar

power structure. The bipolar dominance of the USSR and the USA has waned. Prominent IR Scholar and father of the Neorealism school of thought in international relations, Kenneth Waltz, suggested that a bipolar system is more stable than unipolar and multipolar systems. Furthermore, Waltz argues that wars are generated by imbalances in the international structure, and that this balancing is more likely to fail in multipolar systems. It can be argued that the US is now pursuing a Jeffersonian or Jacksonian policy, i.e. an introverted foreign policy with isolationist features. It is important to note here that the US is not pursuing a complete retrenchment policy, rather a revisionist policy. If this trend continues, then the current international system, characterized by multipolarity and the rise of China, may see the EU becoming even more influential in international peace and stabilization processes. The defining conflict may pivot fully to EU versus China and the key question for the EU then becomes internal political will and institutional design. If this pivot becomes the case, then having a robust foreign policy framework will facilitate peace and stability. CFSP will therefore be more important than ever to secure global stability.

Endnotes

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- [21] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/dv/sede110705headlinegoal2010_/sede110705headlinegoal2010_en.pdf
- [22] Van Vooren, *EU ER Law*, 410.
- [23] European Defence Agency, 'Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)'. *European Defence Agency*, <https://www.eda.europa.eu/what-we-do/our-current-priorities/permanent-structured-cooperation>
- [24] It might get a bit confusing here. The CSDP is part of the CFSP (articles 42-46) TFEU.

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Understanding Paradiplomacy: An Analysis of Subnational Diplomatic Activity in Brazil, Belgium, and the United States

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Published April 10, 2019



Abstract

Since the creation of the new world order in the aftermath of the Second World War, non-state actors have grown in both economic and political importance. While non-state actors such as multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, and international organizations have all been adopted into international relations literature, cities meanwhile have mainly been ignored. The paper provides examples of subnational actors in Brazil, Belgium, and the United States conducting international activities without the role of their central governments.

Keywords: Paradiplomacy, subnational, foreign policy

Who Can Conduct International Relations?

The purpose of this essay is to shed light on the changing nature of the international political system. Subnational actors are playing an increasingly fundamental role in contributing to global economics and political norms. In order to conceptualize this phenomenon, this essay employs examples of paradiplomatic activities conducted by subnational actors within Brazil, Belgium, and the United States. Relations between cities existed long before the invention of the nation-state. The antiquity of diplomacy is evidenced by ancient Greek city-states exchanging ambassadors with one another in order to solidify trade and peace agreements. It was not until 1648, in the aftermath of the 30 Year War, in which 20% of Germany's total population perished, that Europe's major powers introduced the concept of national sovereignty at the peace of Westphalia.¹

The New World Order and the Rise of Non-State Actors

Since the Peace of Westphalia and until the aftermath of the Second World War, the nation-state reigned supreme in its monopoly over diplomatic relations. Two major historical events have occurred since 1648 which shifted the state's monopoly over Westphalian sovereignty. Firstly, the creation of the United Nations and the International Court of Justice in 1945 introduced the concept of international laws and global governance on a semi-enforceable scale. These international institutions reduced the state's ability to maintain total

sovereignty within its borders as Westphalian sovereignty is defined as the sovereigns right to "govern their peoples free of outside interference, whether any such external claim to interfere was based on political, legal or religious principles."² The creation of the United Nations and the implementation of international law reduced the state's total power. In the current geopolitical order, it is possible to prosecute the leader of a sovereign nation-state for committing war crimes or crimes against humanity. On the economic spectrum, states who are members of the World Trade Organization must adhere to the rulings of WTO judges, regardless of the outcome. The second historical event was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the advancement of hyper-globalization.³ Although multinational corporations (MNCs) were powerful before the collapse of the USSR, the 1990s were a crucial decade for MNCs as firstly, Eastern European markets opened to Western firms. Secondly, the United States, where the majority of the MNCs were headquartered, enjoyed a period as the world's sole hegemony while technological progress in the fields of telecommunications and the internet made radical strides in reducing geography as a factor between locations. MNCs became important actors within the international political system, along with other non-state actors such as non-governmental organizations.

The City as an International Actor

The 21st century is characterized by global urbanization. In total, 52% of the world's total population resides in urban areas.⁴ In the Western world, all countries maintain a majority urban population.

¹ Teschke, Benno. *The Myth of 1648: Class, Geopolitics, and the Making of Modern International Relations*. London: Verso, 2003.

² Janis, Mark W., and Carolyn Evans. *Religion and International Law*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2004.

³ Rodrik, Dani. *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.

⁴ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018). *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision, Methodology*. Working Paper No. ESA/P/WP.252. New York: United Nations.

The global percentage of city residents is expected to reach 65% by 2050, with growth powered by Asian and African megacities such as New Delhi, Mumbai, Karachi, Shanghai, Cairo, and Lagos. According to Glaser, cities are the ideal environment for conducting economic interactions, as represented by the rapid acceleration of global urbanization. The top 10 largest cities in the world account for a GDP-PPP of \$9.5 trillion, which is bigger than Japan and Germany's economies combined.⁵ Meanwhile, the 300 largest metropolitan economic areas account for almost half of all global economic activity and represent 67% of global GDP growth.⁶ While cities possess enormous economic power, their political impact is underdeveloped as in many circumstances; they do not possess significant legislative power. In order to address their lack of political power, cities and regions have opened representations in different countries throughout the world. The representations act as liaison offices to encourage cultural, economic, and political interaction between said region or city and the host-actor. Although in its infant stages, subnational led diplomacy represents a shift from traditional state monopolized diplomacy to modern diplomacy, which includes non-state actors.

What is Paradiplomacy?

Although ancient in its origins, subnational diplomacy has largely been ignored due to international relations' state-centric perception of the international political system. In 2016, Rodrigo Tavares released *Paradiplomacy; Cities and States as Global Players*. Tavares' vision was to demonstrate the unseen impact that cities and regions have upon the international political system. Tavares coined

the term *paradiplomacy*, which he defines as “a direct international activity by subnational actors supporting, complementing, correcting, duplicating, or challenging the nation-states' diplomacy.”⁷ The ability of a city to introduce a *paradiplomatic* strategy greatly depends on the laws within the nation-state. The following paragraphs investigate the national legislation in place which regulates international activities conducted by cities and regions. Depending on the regulation, individual cities and states can be in a better position to conduct *paradiplomacy*. This paper examines the cases of Brazil, Belgium, and the United States.

Brazilian Paradiplomacy: The Rise of the Global South

Since 2005, Brazilian states have implemented successful strategies of *paradiplomacy*. Under the Brazilian constitution of 1988, Article 21 states that “the federal government has the power to maintain relations with foreign states and international organizations” yet Article 22, which lists the federal government's exclusive powers, does not mention foreign relations, thereby opening the possibility for Brazilian cities and regions to engage in international activities.⁸ The State of São Paulo boasts the largest regional GDP in South America, accounts for 40% of all foreign direct investment in Brazil and 26% of Brazilian exports. Due to São Paulo's large role in Brazil's economy, São Paulo has developed an extensive international relations policy.⁹ The *São Paulo In the World*, International Relations Plan of 2011 led São Paulo to establish international relations with over 100 countries and 20 multilateral organizations. São Paulo participates in 14 networks of sub-national governments

⁵ United Nations, 2018

⁶ Curtis, Simon. *Global Cities and Global Order*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

⁷ Tavares, Rodrigo. *Paradiplomacy: Cities and States as Global Players*, 211, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016,

⁸ Tavares, 212

⁹ Tavares, 212

and has created 100 active cooperation programs and projects.¹⁰ Although São Paulo has the most robust international relations office, other cities such as Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre, Belo Horizonte, Salvador, Palmas, and Recife all have international relations offices.¹¹ The agendas of the international relations offices include attracting international investment, raising the international reputation of the city or create an image-building strategy, and to facilitate international cooperation through sub-national networks, ex; signing climate change agreements between cities. The mostly laissez-faire approach to subnational international relations from the federal government has allowed Brazilian regions and cities to engage in the fields of subnational diplomacy.

Belgian Paradiplomacy: The Strongest Case of Paradiplomacy

In 1989, the Belgian government underwent a constitutional change entitled *The Third State reform* which ceded significant powers, usually reserved to foreign ministries in other nation-states, to the three regions of Belgium under Article 167 of the 1993 Constitution.¹² For decades, Wallonia and Flanders differed immensely in their foreign affairs strategies, thereby undermining the Belgian government's ability to maintain a compact and consistent foreign policy. As a result of their inability to form a coherent foreign policy, the three regions, Wallonia, Flanders, and Brussels (to a lesser extent) developed their own foreign policies in specific areas including culture, education, international trade, and foreign direct investment.¹³ Within Belgium, regionalism has replaced nationalism as the

central supplier of power for foreign policy. In terms of representations abroad, Flanders has eleven located throughout Europe, the United States, and Africa. The Walloon Export and Foreign Investment Agency (AWEX) has 90 offices worldwide while conducting operations in 100 countries. Flanders and Wallonia both engage in diplomatic functions such as signing trade agreements, cultural exchanges, and ratifying treaties with other sovereign states.¹⁴ Stéphane Paquin, the author of *Mastering Globalization: New Sub-States' Governance and Strategies*, calls the Belgian model the only example of a nation-state ceding its superior foreign policy powers to sub-national actors.¹⁵ As international actors, Belgian regions are far more important than Belgian cities. Due to Belgium's small population, strong attachment to national-linguistic communities, and Brussels' role as the political capital of the European Union, Belgium's major cities have not developed paradiplomatic strategies as seen in the example of Brazil. Regional foreign policy, however, remains unrivaled as Belgium's central government has seeded extensive foreign policy functions to Flanders and Wallonia. Flanders is often cited as the leader in the field of paradiplomacy. Since 1989, Flanders has made foreign policy a central component of its competencies. Flanders has signed 35 treaties with various international actors including sovereign states, regions, and international organizations.¹⁶ The main reason behind Flanders' push into foreign policy is that it raises Flanders' profile as an autonomous international actor detached from the Belgian state, thereby furthering the Flemish desire of independence.

¹⁰ São Paulo Office of Foreign Affairs. *International Relations Plan 2011 – 2014*. Vol. 57.932. São Paulo: Government of São Paulo, 2012.

¹¹ Tavares, 213

¹² Tavares, 172

¹³ Tavares, 173

¹⁴ Tavares, 174

¹⁵ Paquin, Stéphane, and Guy François Lachapelle. *Mastering Globalization: New Sub-states Governance and Strategies*. London: Routledge, 2009.

¹⁶ Tavares, 175

Paradiplomacy in the United States: California and New York City

Since its conception as an independent political entity, The United States has championed a mythical sentiment of detachment from the central government. The American Civil War of 1861 intensely illustrates the historical perception of state independence to 1865, which saw 11 states break from the central government to form the Confederate States of America. Traditionally, the United States Department of State, part of the Executive branch as the Secretary of State serves the Office of the President, has conducted the United State's foreign policy. However American subnational actors, both cities and states, play an extensive role in conducting paradiplomatic activities. The State of California ranks as the largest regional economy and the eighth largest economic entity in the world. With a GDP of over \$2.3 trillion and a population of nearly 40 million, California is both an international economic and political actor.¹⁷ The former governor of California, Jerry Brown played a crucial role in increasing California's role as an international actor. In 2013, Governor Brown met with Chinese President Xi Jinping, to sign a trade agreement between the State of California and the Chinese Ministry of Commerce. Along with China, Governor Brown also signed agreements with former Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, under which both leaders agreed to increase investment and forge cross-border economic development.¹⁸ In terms of international engagement, The California Office of International Trade has representations in London, Tokyo, Frankfurt, Hong Kong and Shanghai. Another major American subnational actor is New York City. Under the leadership of Mayor Mi-

chael Bloomberg, New York City embodied the urban demand for international political recognition. In 2012, Mayor Bloomberg opened the Mayor's Office of International Affairs, with the central ambition of turning New York City into an international political actor. Bloomberg's strategy involves creating or strengthening networks of cities which act upon specific policies that nation-states have difficulty addressing, most infamously climate change.¹⁹ The C40 Network is a group of 40 global cities which act to coordinate best practice policies on combatting climate change through reducing emissions and transitioning to renewable energy sources. In 2010, Mayor Bloomberg chaired the C40 Cities Climate Change Group, thereby increasing New York City's role as a major paradiplomatic actor.²⁰ Since the election of US President Donald Trump in 2016, tensions between cities and the Federal government have risen in two areas. Firstly, various cities including Pittsburg, New York City, and Chicago all decided to continue following the Paris Climate Accords although President Trump removed the United States from the deal. Secondly, President Trump has led a nationwide campaign to deport undocumented migrants. Due to legislative technicalities, city officials can limit their cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) agency, thereby hindering the DHS' task of deporting undocumented migrants. These two examples represent the confrontation between the local and federal government which has become amplified since the election of President Trump.

Conclusion

Although differing in their legislative abilities to conduct paradiplomacy, each city or region that is investigated in this study clearly shows an ambition

¹⁷ *Tavares, 161*

¹⁸ *Tavares, 163*

¹⁹ *Tavares, 198*

²⁰ *Tavares, 199*

to achieve an international political presence. The Brazilian approach to paradiplomacy remains an economic initiative, encouraged by the central government. The city's primary goals are not to facilitate political dialogue, instead their central ambitions are to encourage foreign direct investment and increased trade flows. For a state such as Belgium, who has a complex history of regionalism and a lack of national identity, paradiplomacy is an ideal model for creating a robust foreign policy. Other examples of regions who have adopted similar models of paradiplomacy include Quebec, the Basque Country and Catalonia, who maintain individual foreign policies based on their ambition of

independence or increased autonomy. The American model of paradiplomacy is a hybrid form, split between the Brazilian and Belgian models. Although California's international activities are mostly economic, they have an ability to project their values on a global scale, as illustrated by their greenhouse gas emissions treaties with Mexico and British Columbia. New York City remains the most internationally engaged city in the United States. Mayor Bloomberg's transformation of the city into a leader of subnational power brought city diplomacy into the 21st century.

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A post-colonialist examination of the CFA Franc

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Published: April 10, 2019



Abstract

A study into the Franc CFA, its emergence and continued link to the Francafrique relationship which has existed for centuries, predominantly focusing on the relationship between France and its former colonies post independence in 1960. How does the Franc CFA affect the countries using it, their monetary policies and ability for growth. The debate over the use of the currency has returned in force in recent years, with one side defending the currency as a monetary stabilizer and conduct for economic growth, while others see it as a continued neocolonial policy maker which keeps the states controlled and unable to fully develop to the limit of their potential. If the Franc were to be kept or changed, what could be the policies used to change the relationship as it stands and look towards a different possibility for growth within the region.

Keywords: Franc CFA, Francafrique

Introduction

“La Françafrique, c'est fini” repeats Macron, fourth amongst a line of predecessors to repeat this statement, yet its very existence continues in the Franc CFA and the monetary policies tied to it. Ndongo Samba Sylla, a Senegalese economist who has spent his career researching and publishing on the topic of the Franc CFA, argues that it is “the last colonial currency in activity”. For France, unlike the separation from Indochine and Algeria, the transition to independence of Sub-Saharan African colonies was relatively peaceful¹. This ‘easy’ transition meant no extreme rupture of relations between France and its former colonies, a continuation in many ways of their prior relationship under new methods of neocolonialism. The close relationship between France and its former colonies came to be known as Francafrrique. Parallel to it emerged the Franc CFA, two currencies used primarily by former colonies with continued ties to the French treasury. The Franc has always been a subject for debate, but has particularly re-emerged in recent discussion due to the election of Macron and due to Italian ministers’ critiques of what they deemed to be neocolonial policies by France in the Franc CFA². It is important to reflect on this currency, first by considering its creation and the relationship associated to it, and then by looking at potential changes for the future.

La Francafrrique

The term was originally used positively by President Félix Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast to describe the relationship between his country and France and the positive effect it had had on the Ivory Coast. It has since been more

critically used as a synonym for France’s neocolonialist behaviours in Africa, particularly by Francois-Xavier Verschave who wrote a book entitled *La Francafrrique, le plus long scandale de la République* in which he denounces and critiques the visible and hidden bonds between France and Africa. This book, now widely recognized in popular culture as anti-colonialism and Neo-colonial attitudes has helped solidify the negative aspects of Francafrrique in the popular psyche. Francafrrique was at its peak from the 1960s to the end of the Cold War but has re-emerged in mainstream talks recently, particularly in relation to its link to the Franc CFA. It emerged for political, economic and diplomatic reasons. It was first political, in an effort for France to retain colonial powers and have close ties with other francophone countries, while deterring communism in Africa and maintaining themselves as an important power, as well as ensuring continued military presence on the continent³. The US saw France’s presence in a region it had little ties to as a good way for allies to stop the flow of communism coming from the east, while France saw this ‘backyard’ or “pré carré” (an expression widely used in France even by politicians to refer to the old colonies) of theirs as a way to compete with the US as a major power. Behind the economic rationale were the many trade deals that gave France exclusive or at least preferential trading rights, limiting exports for these countries but putting France in a beneficial position to help boost its economy. It also led to the creation of the Franc CFA to place France in an advantageous position vis-à-vis its former colonies. Finally, the diplomatic reasons were that it helped keep France as a key player on the international field, with a number of international votes likely to back France in its views or proposals in inter-

¹ Chafer, Tony. “Chirac and 'La Francafrrique': No Longer a Family Affair.”

² Nubukpo, Kako. “« La Zone Franc Et Le Franc CFA Méritent Un Sérieux Dépoussiérage »

³ Chafer, Tony. “Chirac and 'La Francafrrique': No Longer a Family Affair.”

governmental organizations because of the linked interests and a familial relationship with all of them due to shared history and language.

Some say the old colonies, with Franc CFA users in particular, were able to develop through FrancAfrique with France as a potential guiding force, aiding them in developing their democracies and teaching economic tools needed for this to happen slowly but surely. Critiques however use the term FrancAfrique derogatively, using it to encompass all the negative and underhanded neocolonial policies which have been put in place by France since the 60s to keep Sub-Saharan Africa and their economic interests underhand. Otherwise said, "France a fric" (fric being slang for money) is used to say how France has been buying up African resources to keep for itself, at the detriment of those countries who should truly be benefiting from it.⁴

Regardless of the position taken, FrancAfrique as an expression of vested interests in Africa by the French has been clear for years in France's policies. First and most importantly by the explicit diplomatic, political and economic reasons mentioned above. We also consider the military presence in Africa which in recent years has either grown or remained the same, with 10,000 specialized soldiers on the continent. Military interventions by France have generally been unilateral, an effort to keep the peace as suits their interests. Mali for example⁵.

With the tying of the Franc CFA to whatever currency France was using, they have been able to maintain preferential trade agreements while, economists would say, making it harder to trade

with others due to the strength of the currency relative to that of the countries (discussed later in France CFA). France has kept favorable leaders⁶ in place since the independence surge in the 60s in an effort to better their interests in the region. Of these leaders many have not been particularly representative of the democratic ideal France theoretically stands for.

Social/Cultural Aspects

Throughout its colonial history France has always strived to create a social stratification within the colonized people whereby some would be educated in the french way to become 'french' themselves⁷. Per Frantz Fanon in *The wretched of the Earth* this illusion of equality shatters easily once you join a truly french community, showing that even with the same level of education you will remain apart simply because you are other. Nevertheless this middle ground was acceptable by many as it was a way to ensure -if not equal status in the eyes of the French- at least a certain level of respect for their education. This system has in many ways continued since the fall of colonialism, with those educated 'in the French way' much more likely to emerge successful and be backed by France for their policies in their native states. At the beginning of Sub-Saharan Africa's independences, a power vacuum emerged from the removal of French officers who had previously been in power led it to willingly accept continued French intervention and guidance, with those who were put in place being leaders educated by the French and willing to act as puppets to the French regime. As time went on this influence continued and those allowed to ascend to power or put in place by French influence were all leaders who had either been educated in this way and would

⁴ "The Sarkozy-Obama Epic African Adventure."

⁵ Sharife, Khadija. "Françafrique: Propping Up Africa's Dictators."

⁶ Chafer, Tony. "Chirac and 'La Françafrique': No Longer a Family Affair."

⁷ Clignet, Remi P., and Philip J. Foster. "French and British Colonial Education in Africa."

understand/embody French ideals and goals or simply be willing to follow them regardless, all to benefit of France⁸. Leaders who fit the patriotic goals of the French state. Many dictators, for example Gnassingbé Eyadema who came to power in Togo through a military coup and lead a repressive regime, had full support from France or was aided in his ascension because he furthered French interests. Eyadema was described by President de la République Jacques Chirac as “a close personal friend of mine and of France”. He ruled for 40 years but really was helped by Foccart (chief advisor for France on African policy⁹) through phone calls meant to facilitate French interests¹⁰. This same familiar and friendly attitude can be felt between France and many other African leaders, as exemplified at the annual Africa-France summits which come across more as friendly annual gatherings than summits with any true political goals since no conclusions or statements are ever released post summit¹¹. Dictators could be put in place with the sole purpose of allowing France easy access to resources, for example oil (the Elf scandal¹²), at the detriment of locals. There is even evidence of French participation in support of the Hutu government just before (and perhaps slightly during) the Rwandan genocide¹³. This specific example has even entered into popular knowledge through shows such as *Black Earth Rising* or the Rwandan report from 2017 on the subject. It means that rather than true independence, Africa has in the eyes of many simply shifted from outright imperialism to shadowy neocolonialism with no true independence in either case.

This has changed, however Eyadema only died and left power in 2005 and some leaders hand picked by Foccart and his successors are still in power today. Now the influence seems to come more through foreign aid. Some say the aid facilitates corruption and prevents growth throughout the continent since it is given without accountability or follow up¹⁴. The same few who have always kept power and money continue to do so. The people however seem to receive nothing.

The Franc CFA

The Franc CFA actually refers to two currencies: the Western African Franc CFA (used by eight countries) and the Central African Franc CFA (used by six countries). Of these fourteen users, twelve countries are former French colonies. Established in 1945, it has always been pegged to whichever currency France is using, first the French Franc and, since 1999, the Euro. For supporters of the currency, it is argued that it has helped stabilize the region monetarily, giving these countries a dependable currency with which to trade since the Franc and the euro have always stayed relatively strong and both currencies have guaranteed convertibility. This has allowed easier and preferential trade towards Europe, and France specifically. It has also been claimed that it has helped the user countries grow economically due to inter-region trade from a shared currency and trade with more developed Western countries, allowing them to have a certainty in their trade as they developed post independence. Now after 73 years of use, and almost 60 since most of these countries gained independence, this growth is debatable. When placed next to other concerns

⁸ “The Sarkozy-Obama Epic African Adventure.”

⁹ “Jacques Foccart.” *The Economist*

¹⁰ Sharife, Khadija. “Françafrique: Propping Up Africa's Dictators.”

¹¹ Chafer, Tony. “Chirac and 'La Françafrique': No Longer a Family Affair.”

¹² Gibert, Marie. “France Is Forging New Relations with Its Former Colonies, but Old Habits Die Hard.”

¹³ Moore, Jina. “Rwanda Accuses France of Complicity in 1994 Genocide.”

¹⁴ Moyo, Dambisa. “Why Foreign Aid Is Hurting Africa.”

regarding the use of the currency in general, it creates doubts as to its viable future.

Economic Issues

Inflation has overall been kept down due to the links with such strong currencies. One of the main goals of any bank linked to either Franc CFA currency is to keep the monetary value perpetually close to that of the Euro, dependent on Europe's decisions on how the euro and subsequently the Franc CFA will perform. This means constantly worrying about inflation and trying to follow European policies rather than being able to take the money coming in to develop the local economies. This stifles the flow of currency and prevents positive change. Inflation in the Ivory Coast has only risen 6% over the last fifty years compared to 29% in neighboring Ghana, which does not use the Franc CFA. Some see this as positive, a monetary stability which in turn stabilizes the region and aids its trade and growth. Others see this same figure as limiting. Only 6% inflation is little for any region if we consider 50 years have gone by. When we link this to other figures which show only an average growth of 1.4% a year for CFA users compared to a 2.5% average growth for all of Sub-Saharan Africa since the CFA was pegged to the Euro, we see a limit in the arguments that the currency encourages growth¹⁵. This is not only linked to the currency, but to the nature of the exports themselves. Since colonial times, most exports from this region have been raw materials, mainly imported by France. If demand for these materials were to shift, or supply one year to fall due to production issues, this too would greatly impact economic growth. A strong and non-fluctuating currency, one on which the automatic stabilizers of currency can have no

effect, mean less attractive goods to countries which -unlike France- do not already have preferential trade agreements. This strong currency also makes imports more expensive locally as it changes the purchasing power parity, continuing the dependence on raw materials. It limits the possibilities for trade for the very reason which makes it strong.

Similarly, because of this dependence on the pegged currency and the need to limit inflation, very little credit is ever offered as it is considered too risky. With little credit to offer, few small businesses can hope to fund and develop themselves and people cannot afford to grow and create additional wealth for the country. This is not an issue of exchange rate, regardless of the strength of the euro, but rather a need for a "regime of change"¹⁶. If the currency were allowed to flow more, less time and capital would be spent on maintaining inflation levels and ensuring the exchange rate. Rather, more effort could be given to growth policies to encourage the local economy. With this would come increased credit for small loans, allowing a greater number of small businesses to develop and eventually grow. With a fluctuating Franc CFA, the currency would be able to encourage more growth, following the hopes which supporters of the currency have always had for it.

Historical Issues

Another major source of debate is the specific link of the currencies to France. Per the agreements necessary for the peg, 50% of all pooled foreign reserves from the participating countries are to be kept in the French treasury, governed and controlled by French officials. Some claim this

¹⁵ "Francophone Africa's CFA Franc Is under Fire." *The Economist*

¹⁶ Nubukpo, Kako. "Franc CFA : Les Propos De M. Macron Sont « Déshonorants Pour Les Dirigeants Africains »."

money is used for France's own use, taking the money as payment for the continuance of the peg to the euro and never returning it to its rightful owners. Most would argue against this, as it represents so small a sum compared to French reserves as to be a drop in the ocean.¹⁷ Regardless, concerns grow out of the fact that a foreign state controls such an important part of the currency. It is held at a low interest rate, in no way aiding the countries which were forced to place it. Further concerns emerge when we consider that the currency is printed in France, solidifying the idea that the French control it more than the states actually using the currency do, and leaving them with few tangible powers over the currency. French officials are on boards governing both CFA currencies¹⁸, and Italian ministers have recently gone so far as to accuse France of using these same reserves to further their own neocolonial agendas, pushing people to flee the countries because of the limited development¹⁹. Though few believe there is truth to these statements, it shows how the concerns over the colonial nature of this currency spread even to Europe (though mainly as a political tool). Though the currency is pegged to the Euro, and so major changes in policy must be passed through the EU before they can be implemented, France remains a major influencer in these currencies when it claims to no longer engage in FrancAfrique and supposes that it has no undue influence in the former colonies. Is it any wonder that these colonial links, obvious in both the location of those controlling the currency and in the name itself, are enough for some to demand a change?

Concerns over the currency emerge over its use locally within the region. Though it was meant to

inspire intra-regional trade, it has only truly helped France-region trade. To see very little growth in trade when they share a currency and most share a language is troubling. There is a group however which has benefitted from the use of this currency. Not the middle and lower class, for whom the high currency is a hindrance to exports and a limit to their credit. Rather it has served the elites. With a currency pegged to such a European one, first the Franc and now the Euro, it has always been easy for money to leave the African countries and remain in Europe. Money can be exported and stored in banks within Europe with a guarantee of a fixed exchange rate, guaranteed convertibility and liberty of circulation, thereby keeping the value of these sums stable. This also aids foreign companies, who can profit from the monetary stability and cheap labour to produce at lower costs in the CFA nations, but send all profits back to their home state with no benefits for the host country. Whatever money is able to come into the country, large percentages of it are sent immediately back out, either by corrupt politicians who keep this money in their European pocket or from foreign companies sending the profits home. Kako Nubukpo, who was head of the Francophonie organization until he was let go following his Oped on the Franc CFA, names this relationship between African elites and the Western world the "route de la servitude volontaire" (way of voluntary servitude)²⁰. Those who can afford to trade, or who are in power and receive money through various means for this position go first through France for funds and trade and then through the Bretton Woods institutions, continuing the route of former colonialism through Europe and the Americas. He argues that they chose to follow this route as it benefits them rather than the people of their

¹⁷ Nubukpo, Kako. "« La Zone Franc Et Le Franc CFA Méritent Un Sérieux Dépoussiérage ».

¹⁸ Specia, Megan. "The African Currency at the Center of a European Dispute."

¹⁹ Nubukpo, Kako. "« La Zone Franc Et Le Franc CFA Méritent Un Sérieux Dépoussiérage ».

²⁰ Mbog, Raoul. "« Le Franc CFA Freine Le Développement De L'Afrique ».

countries, furthering their economic interests at the cost of economic development. Those who have power, who could distance themselves from this neocolonial and profiteering status-quo are the same people who have the least interest in changing things as it benefits them. Perhaps it is time for change, either in the currency itself to benefit everyone or in the currency as a whole

A Change

Are these states truly sovereign if they do not control their own currency and are governed in part by foreign self interests? Dependence on former colonial powers when the currency benefits mainly the elites sits badly with the local majority. A change then must be made. If the Franc CFA is to depend on the Euro for its policies why not have closer ties to Frankfurt, where the European Central Bank is located and where Euro monetary policies are decided? Why then have it mainly with Paris? Perhaps a range within which the currency could fluctuate around the euro would allow the CFA countries to develop more of their own policies, or at least greater communication with Europe on coming European policies or negotiations regarding policies for the Franc. Going through France however no longer seems like the proper solution for the countries using the Franc, though it may still seem positive for France.

On the other hand, a switch of currencies could be done. Perhaps the Franc CFA could be pegged to a series of currencies or an alternative weaker one to the Euro. The yuan has been proposed due to the increased FDI coming from China. This however would likely become another system of peg currency over which they have no control and not solve the current problems vis a vis the Euro. Otherwise, it has been proposed for CFA countries to switch to the Nigerian currency, the strongest in

the region due to the success of oil but also considered unstable because of tension over this resource. This switch could help bring the currency closer to home, help create a true region trade system based on a shared currency. Historical tension however means the leaders on both sides would need to agree on a plan of action and potential resources for monetary policies²¹. As it stands this is unlikely to happen soon. The current situation however, with the inflexibility of the currency and its negative effects on local economies outweighing the positive ones coupled with the continued dependence on France cannot continue. So long as the currency remains entrenched in these neocolonial ideas and favors more the producers of the currency and the elites of the countries using it rather than its locals, there will always be widespread dissatisfaction with the use of the Franc CFA.

The Future

France has been saying they are disassembling Francafrique since the 90s, under Mitterrand, Sarkozy, Hollande and now Macron. Macron, hoped to be a fresh new start with his progressive ideals, instead showed himself to be closed off to negotiation²². Francafrique was supposedly “over” and had been for years, though recent evident suggests otherwise. The Franc CFA was a non-subject, unavailable for discussion (and therefore change). Though there has been a lessened dependance on France in recent years, due to increasing FDI from other countries, the link remains.

Regardless of France’s claim to be gone, it is clear they are not. This situation cannot proceed as is. As France becomes more and more a middle power country, focused particularly in recent years on Brexit and maintaining the integrity of Europe

²¹ “Francophone Africa's CFA Franc Is under Fire.” *The Economist*

²² Libération. “En Finir Avec La Francafrique.”

alongside Germany, it no longer has the power or the time to put pressure on this relationship. There is no doubt that the relationship will continue, it has after all been developed over centuries and this idea of a Francophone “family” has flourished in the decades since independence. Neither side would benefit in disregarding that history entirely. But the time for dependance on France or its exploitation of the colonies is over. The general populace seems to no longer want it, and with changing governments and greater international scrutiny change seems on the horizon. Not through Macron, who likely along with his peers will attempt to hold on as long as possible, but from the people of the colonies themselves who want better, those whom -unlike their elite ruling class- the currency does not favor. With this distancing will likely come a departure from the Franc CFA. Seeped in colonial history and a reliance on the French, the CFA as it exists cannot hope to continue for long for the many reasons explained above. Rather it should either float around the euro and work more with Frankfurt on its policies, or change currencies entirely. This will require big changes, and a certain uncertainty for a few years but will ultimately return monetary power to the locals, with decisions which are made by them and for them.

This is unlikely to happen for a few years yet. Nevertheless the relationship is likely to deteriorate in coming years, or at least experience change. No longer in a uniquely close relationship to France, perhaps one will develop with Asia, or Britain as it figures out where to turn post Brexit.

Conclusion

The Franc CFA was created as an extension to Francafrique, and remains a symbol of this relationship. Though it no longer has the hold it once had, evidence remains of this relationship, its heavy history and the effects it has to this day on

former colonies. The use of the Franc CFA, regarded by some as a great tool for growth for its users and by others as a colonial restraint, has long been debated. It is the opinion of many that this debate should end and a solution be found. Be it a fluctuating peg, greater communication with the EU or a change in currency entirely, the status quo of this currency seems on the verge of change. “The last colonial currency in activity”, this cannot be disputed regardless of the side of the debate, one need only look at the name to determine its origins. The end of its use or simply a change in its ties would represent a major shift away from colonialism. Though to most in the newer generations this history seems long over, we must remember that for most of these countries independence was gained a little less than 60 years ago, well within human memory. A separation from this past through a change in currency would signify a new development in the history of this region, one which now seeks to develop itself on its own terms.

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