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APPROACHING THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

A study of coherence and comprehensiveness in the UN, NATO and EU.

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Introduction

One of the challenges with the comprehensive approach is that it has no common definition; hence it is used by a lot of actors in International Relations, but not necessarily with the exact same connotation. All the same, it seems to be a common view that comprehensive approach is about “[...] pursuing an approach aimed at integrating the political, security, development, rule of law, human rights and humanitarian dimensions of international missions.”¹. Nevertheless, there seems to be an international and inter organizational acknowledgement of comprehensive approach being the most effective way of solving complex, international crises.

What is it that makes an approach comprehensive, and why is it so efficient in solving complex crises? This article starts out with an introduction to the comprehensive approach concept, in an attempt to describe what it is, or maybe seems to be, in the contemporary world of international crises resolution. I will then highlight some of the natural obstacles and merits that adhere to NATO, the UN and the EU, due to their charters and treaties, when it comes to achieving coherence in their conduct of crises resolution. Finally, I will have a look at the potential for comprehensiveness within the three named organizations, and see if any of them have a prospective for a coherent approach to comprehensiveness. To be successful I believe one should have both.

Background to Comprehensive Approach

The development of the comprehensive approach is first and foremost a Western phenomenon, although Kriistina Rintakoski and Mikko Autti stress the importance of other organizations, such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, in the development of the concept².

The United Nations has taken the longest step towards implementing their concept³, but then the UN started developing their Integrated Missions before any of the others⁴. Helinä Kokkarinen says that the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe may claim that they have promoted comprehensiveness ever since 1975,

by conducting their commitments in accordance with their charter⁵. However, it might be stretching it a bit far, claiming there is causality from, what was then known as, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, to today's initiative. All the same, it is undoubtedly possible to find several historical examples on comprehensiveness between different actors in crisis management long before the UN initiative started.

Espen Barth Eide, Anja Therese Kaspersen, Randolph Kent and Karin von Hippel points at the change from what they call first generation peacekeeping operations to the more complex, multi-functional post cold war operations, as the source of a comprehensive approach⁶. These complex crises demanded a multi-functional solution. More than anything, Kofi Annan's initiative as General Secretary of the UN in the spring of 2000, leading to the Brahimi-report later the same year, was most likely the single enterprise that got the train rolling⁷.

Why today's conflicts are more complex has to do with the changed view on intervention, and what justifies the use of military power against another state. The UN Charter's articles 42 and 51 legitimize this course of action. The great change in practice in international law is that human rights have increased their relative importance, whilst the opposite has happened with states' sovereignty. James Turner Johnson discusses intervention in depth, and concludes that it, in certain cases, not only is legitimate to intervene due to humanitarian reasons, but that it even might be an obligation⁸. This view is supported by Henrik Syse, who says that humanitarian intervention may be necessary in extreme situations⁹.

The practice we have seen from the early nineties, with intervention due to a state's internal affairs, made possible with the fall of the Soviet Union and justified by the increased importance of human rights, has led to increased complexity. There is no longer only a ceasefire to monitor. One has to separate at least two warring factions, negotiate a ceasefire, give humanitarian aid, conduct security sector reform, rebuild a failed state, create democracy and assist the state in developing a sustainable and prosperous economy¹⁰. Hence, the comprehensive approach has developed as an answer to the increased complexity of contemporary conflicts, as a result of the change in the worlds view on when it is legitimate to intervene in another state's internal affairs.

Comprehending comprehensiveness

In order to understand the comprehensive approach, it is necessary to define what it may be, and to find out if the UN, NATO and the EU have a potential for a comprehensive approach. Karsten Friis and Pia Jarmyr state that “Comprehensiveness can be achieved among various groups of actors at various levels and at various stages.”¹¹, and categorize the levels into three: The first one is Whole of Government Approach, which aims to synchronize and coordinate the actions from a wide range of governmental organizations. The next level is Intra-agency, which seeks to harmonize activity and projects taking place in the organization’s name. This is very much what happens within the three organizations we are looking at in this article. The third level is what they call Inter-agency, and this is probably the most complex one, dealing with collaboration and coordination between different actors.

Friis & Jarmyr continue their discussion on comprehensiveness, by categorizing the degree of concord or unity between the actors in a comprehensive approach¹². Their highest level is coherence, which they describe as a coalition, acting on a shared mandate. The next level is cooperation; actors with corresponding, at least to some degree, mandate, coordinating their activities with other actors. The third level is what they call collaboration and coordination; where actors have overlapping mandates, they preserve their independence, but are willing to organize activities with other actors. The lowest level of comprehensiveness is coexistence, where cooperation takes place only when it cannot be avoided.

Following Friis and Jarmyr’s description above, one may claim that a comprehensive approach can be a lot of different activities, as long as they are coordinated between two or more actors, even if these actors are from the same state. Bringing this into a contemporary conflict, it could be argued that Norway has a comprehensive approach in Afghanistan, in the Faryab province, since we coordinate, to some extent, efforts from more than one ministry there (thinking about it, a few years ago that would have been; to have a strategy). The same can be said about all the other nations having resources from more than one of the states instruments of power in theatre.

On the international organizations level, there are several of them there approaching the conflict with comprehensiveness as well. NATO

has a comprehensive approach, coordinating their own military assets from the different troop contributing nations, but also with other actors in theatre. The EU has their comprehensive approach, not with military forces in this conflict, since that kind of contribution is coordinated and commanded by NATO, but they have EU Police and a lot of other contributions under the EU umbrella. Last but not least, the UN has their contributions in the country, coordinating all the effort, or at least trying to, together with the host nation's own assets and wishes.

The comprehensive family can indeed be a large one, and if every actor on their own level has a comprehensive approach, this may not necessarily strengthen the overall coordination of the total international effort. On the contrary, it might very well impede the endeavour. Nevertheless, it is of course as always the sovereign state that has the last word in what that specific state will contribute with, and decides how and where its resources shall be used. This is probably the key dilemma for any international organization, thus the decision making processes in our three organizations are subjected to closer scrutiny.

Coherence – something to have, or something to gain

I argue that there probably will be a higher degree of coherence if all members of an organization are taking part in the decision making process, and that they are more likely to contribute in accordance with the organizations decisions, if they took part in the decision making process. Another important factor is how the contributions are financed. If the organization has common funding of the effort, so that the contributing states get their costs refunded, they will probably be more willing to follow the decisions made by the organization. If neither appear, it will be much harder to achieve coherence in an operation. I will in the following chapters take a closer look at the potential for coherence within the UN, NATO and the EU.

The UN – decision process

With its 192 member states, the UN is by far the biggest international organization in the world today, and it has a unique position, as it is the most extensive attempt on regulating relations between the world's states¹³. In other words, the UN is comprehensive by nature.

But does it have a decision making process that supports this natural born comprehensiveness?

The General Assembly is where all member states are represented, and its tasks, duties and rights are presented in the UN Charter, chapter four. In accordance with article number 10 of the Charter, the General Assembly “[...] may discuss any questions or any matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter [...]”¹⁴. When it comes to international conflicts, article 12 states that

“While the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the present Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests.”¹⁵

The only exception is if the process in the Security Council is obstructed by the use of veto whilst world peace is at risk, then the General Assembly has a right to act¹⁶. Nevertheless, the General Assembly has a rather modest function when it comes to intervention in international crises. On the other hand, the General Assembly has a function as director of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, and one of their more important tasks is, in accordance with article 17 of the Charter, to approve the UNs budget. This right gives the General Assembly (GA) a rather influential role, since it includes imposing expenses on the member states, and to “[...] approve any financial and budgetary arrangements with specialized agencies [...]”¹⁷. In addition to this, the GA elects the ten rotating members of the Security Council, and they elect the members of the ECOSOC.

In accordance with the UN Charters article 24, the Security Council has the responsibility to maintain international peace and security, and the members “[...] agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter.”¹⁸. With the authority from chapter seven in the Charter, they may impose their decisions by use of force. Hence, the Security Council is where decisions on what and where are taken. Where the UN shall intervene, and what the resources, or the instruments of power, will be. The influence of the non-members of the Security Council have is in electing its members, and they can, in accordance with article 31,

participate without vote in the discussion, if the Council considers that interests of that member are specially affected.

The Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), agreed to be established in 2005, is the most important of the nine subsidiary bodies to the Security Council when it comes to international peace and security. The decision to establish the PBC was by the GA motivated by:

Emphasizing the need for a coordinated, coherent and integrated approach to post-conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation with a view to achieving sustainable peace, recognizing the need for a dedicated institutional mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction and to assist them in laying the foundation for sustainable development, and recognizing the vital role of the United Nations in that regard, we decide to establish a Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body¹⁹.

If nothing else, it does at least show that the General Assembly focused on a comprehensive approach when they reached the agreement on establishing the PBC.

The last body of the UN that I will touch upon is the Economic and Social Council, the ECOSOC. Its 54 members are elected by the General Assembly for a period of three years, and its responsibilities are given in the Charter's articles 62 – 66. ECOSOC is important to mention, although it mainly has an advisory role, because it coordinates some important specialized agencies.

Specialized agencies are autonomous organizations working with the UN and each other through the coordinating machinery of the ECOSOC at the intergovernmental level, and through the Chief Executives Board for coordination (CEB) at the intersecretariat level²⁰.

That gives the ECOSOC the task to coordinate activities from agencies such as the World Bank Group and the IMF, both having an important function in state reconstruction.

To sum up the UN decision making system; the Security Council is given the responsibility to maintain international peace and security, thus deciding what the UN shall do where and when. Only 15 of

the 192 member states in the UN have a seat in the Council, hence the voices of a vast majority of the 177 members are not necessarily heard when the decision is made, and one can only conclude that participation in the decision making process in the UN is low.

The UN – financing

The UN budget is actually three different budgets. Two of them are covered by the member states and are imposed upon them by the General Assembly. These are the budget posts that cover expenses for the UN's staff, activities and infrastructure, and the budget for peacekeeping operations²¹. The third budget covers the expenses of other UN organizations, which is funded by voluntary contributions from member states.

The budget for the UN staff covers a two year period, and is approved by the General Assembly by resolution. Financing of UN peacekeeping operations is different. Every peacekeeping operation is handled individually, and the budget for one operation is passed as a resolution. As an example, the budget for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon for 2008 - 2009 was passed in resolution 265 in the 62. session.

Karen Mingst and Margaret Karns point out one of the largest challenges in the UN, by saying: "Historically, the UN has had to wait for members to volunteer troops and logistical support, and the members in turn must wait for reimbursement of the costs for providing forces." ²². Hopefully, some of this has improved after the establishment of the Peacebuilding Fund in 2006, in order to "[...] establish a crucial bridge between conflict and recovery at a time when other funding mechanisms may not yet be available."²³

To conclude on the UN financial system, low participation in the decision making system is countered by a high level of inclusion in the cost sharing for the organisation. Although most members are not included in the decision making; their willingness to participate in the implementation of the resolution may increase as they are re-funded for any contributions. The situation for the special agencies is quite different though, since they depend on contributions from member states. This may lead to a situation where the special agencies become dependent on substantial contributions from only a few countries, thus, at least indirectly, turning their loyalty towards this

cluster of countries instead of pursuing the objectives of the UN. In the words of Friis and Jarmyr, this could jeopardize the coherence, where the actors are in a coalition, acting on a shared mandate, bringing it down to the level of cooperation, if not even lower.

NATO – decision making process

NATO has a civilian as well as a military structure. On the civilian side, it is the North Atlantic Council (NAC) which is NATO's arena for decision making. The NAC, being the only body authorized by the Treaty, in article 9, has been granted the right to establish any secondary bodies as deemed necessary. The same article states explicitly that all members shall be represented in the NAC. The permanent representation to the NAC is by representatives with status as ambassadors. In addition, the NAC conducts meetings on the level of Defense- and Foreign-minister level and on the level of Heads of state. Its *raison d'être* is to:

[...] discuss policy or operational questions requiring collective decisions. In sum, it provides a forum for wide-ranging consultation between members on all issues affecting their security. All members have an equal right to express their views and share in the consensus on which decisions are based. Decisions are agreed upon on the basis of unanimity and common accord. There is no voting or decision by majority. This means that policies decided upon by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) are supported by and are the expression of the collective will of all the sovereign states that are members of the Alliance and are accepted by all of them.²⁴

The main conclusion from the text above is of course that all decisions are made by consensus. The two other main civilian bodies in NATO are the Defense Planning Committee (DPC) and the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), where all decisions are made by consensus as well.

The three main bodies all take military advice from NATO's superior military authority, the Military Committee (MC). The MC's primary function is to give advice on military strategy, and to give recommendations to the civilian bodies on efforts deemed necessary to implement decisions on NATO's operations. In addition, they are to give

guidelines to the military strategic commanders. Thus, the MC is a vital link between the political decision making process and the military structure of NATO.

NATO – financing

In NATO, the member state covers its own costs in general, by training and equipping their own forces and making them available for NATO's military structure. Moreover, member states cover their own expenses for contributions to international operations²⁵. In addition to this, members contribute with money to NATO's budgets, after a cost share model they themselves have agreed on. An alternative way of financing is when members agree on common funding of specific projects²⁶.

There are three different NATO budgets which member states contribute to. The first one is the civilian budget, which is financed mainly by the members' foreign ministry, with the aim to reach NATO's core objectives.²⁷ The military budget is meant to cover common costs connected to the military structure, such as the Military Committee, the strategic commands and NATO's Early Warning and Control Force. The third and last budget is NATO's Security Investment Program, intended to cover investments connected to their chain of command. As the NATO Handbook states; "Common funding will focus on the provision of requirements which are over and above those which could reasonably be expected to be made available from national resources."²⁸

Since all members are represented in all the decision making bodies, and all decisions are made by consensus, one must conclude that NATO certainly scores maximum on coherence. At least theoretically, any member can veto any decision. When it comes to financing, it is only the permanent structure which is blessed with common funding. Any cost connected with a member's force training or deployment, stays with the member country itself. Nevertheless, the positive coherence connected with the consensus decision model by far outweighs the negative aspects of their financial model.

The EU – decision making process

The EU's decision making process involves in particular three main institutions: the European Parliament, the Council of the European

Union and the European Commission, each having their responsibilities and power laid down in the Treaties. The latest treaty being the Treaty of Lisbon, recently ratified after a long struggle with the Czech President and an Irish referendum playing the leading roles.

The EU's rules for consultation are almost as versatile as the organization itself, and the Treaty states that "The functioning of the Union shall be founded on representative democracy."²⁹ Nevertheless, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has very clear rules applied to decision making. As it's written in article 24 of the Treaty:

"The 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."

In the continuation of article 24, it says:

"Within the framework of the principles and objectives of its external action, the Union shall conduct, define and implement a common foreign and security policy [...] The Member States shall support the Union's external and security policy actively and unreservedly in a spirit of loyalty and mutual solidarity and shall comply with the Union's action in this area."

The main strength of this article is in the last paragraph, stating that members shall support and comply with the Union's action. As a matter of fact, the EU has stated in their Treaty that members will act coherently; hence there is no doubt about it. And the decision making process on CFSP matters supports it, since decisions in general are made unanimously. The exceptions to this rule are described in article 31.

The other decision making processes in the EU are different, and regulations of the voting in the different institutions and the weighing of the votes from the member states, are all regulated in the Treaty's part six; Institutional and Financial Provisions. However, the main observation in this context is that the EU has a prerequisite to coherence by their rules for making decisions on CFSP, which is the subject when testing the EU's comprehensiveness in an international crisis.

The EU –financing

There are different mechanisms financing civilian and military operations in the EU³⁰. This is clearly stated in article 41 of the Treaty:

Operating expenditure to which the implementation of this Chapter gives rise shall also be charged to the Union budget, except for such expenditure arising from operations having military or defence implications and cases where the Council acting unanimously decides otherwise.

This shows that if a member contributes with resources to a military operation, for instance operation Atalanta, that member will have to cover the costs. If a member contributes to any operation other than military, for instance EUPOL in Afghanistan, the EU will pay the bill. Article 41 continues:

In cases where expenditure is not charged to the Union budget, it shall be charged to the Member States in accordance with the gross national product scale, unless the Council acting unanimously decides otherwise.

The normal routine in the EU is obviously that the costs are shared in accordance with the BNP. The main principle for military operations is, on the other hand, that the contributing country is stuck with the bill. There is one exception, the Athena mechanism³¹, which may reimburse specific common costs for military operations.

To conclude on the EU's likely coherence, it must be that they have a good potential through their decision making process, especially on concerns connected to the CFSP. Even in all other matters, all members are represented, although the larger countries will have a heavier vote in many institutions and situations. In addition to this, the EU has common funding for many of its operations, except for their military and defense actions. This should really contribute to a very coherent comprehensiveness for the EU, at least in theory.

Comprehensive enough

Following Friis and Jarmyr's article, it should be possible to bring the coherence to a higher level given that the actors come from the same organization, thus having the same mandate and objectives, at least theoretically. But, what if the organization itself is anything but com-

prehensive, at least when it comes to solving complex crises? In the following chapters, I will discuss briefly what resources the three organizations have imbedded to become comprehensive intra-agency. I will then finish off this article by amalgamating the coherence and the comprehensiveness discussions, thus making out if any of our three candidates have a potential for a coherent and comprehensive approach.

The UN's potential comprehensiveness

Even if the UN has stated in their doctrine that they will be a catalyst for other actors, they possess a large amount of resources of their own. The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) is the body tasked with solving violent conflicts through diplomacy, in addition to coordinating all efforts to support free elections³². Free and just elections are a condition for good governance, another function the UN supports a failed state to build or rebuild, a task normally given to the Special Representative of the Secretary General and his staff. In addition to this, the UN has its United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) and the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), both tasked with development of good governance.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is a department subordinate to the Secretary General, and its mission is to:

[...] plan, prepare, manage and direct UN peacekeeping operations, so that they can effectively fulfill their mandates under the overall authority of the Security Council and General Assembly, and under the command vested in the Secretary-General.

DPKO provides political and executive direction to UN peacekeeping operations, and maintains contact with the Security Council, troop and financial contributors, and parties to the conflict in the implementation of Security Council mandates. The Department works to integrate the efforts of UN, governmental and non-governmental entities in the context of peacekeeping operations. DPKO also provides guidance and support on military, police, mine action and other relevant issues to other UN political and peacebuilding missions.³³

Its main functions are conducted through its three offices; the Office of Operations, monitoring and coordinating the ongoing opera-

tions. The Office of Military Affairs is supporting ongoing operations, planning for new operations and conducting force generation processes. The Office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions was created in 2007:

[...] to provide an integrated and forward-looking approach to United Nations post-conflict assistance in the areas of rule of law and security institutions. OROLSI brings together the following DPKO entities: the Police Division (PD), the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) Section, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the Security Sector Reform (SSR) Unit and the Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Service.³⁴

With the resources coordinated through the DPKO, the UN certainly has a comprehensive approach both on security and rule of law in a very wide definition of the terms.

There are three programs coordinated by the General Assembly responsible for humanitarian assistance. They are the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is responsible for the 31,7 million refugees in the world³⁵. The World Food Program (WFP) shall contribute with food to people in crises and conflict, which they did according to their web page, by distributing 3,3 million tons of food to 86,1 million people in 80 countries in 2007. The third program is the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which works for children, their health and security.

When it comes to sustainable economy, it is "One of the UN's central mandates [...]. As much as 70 per cent of the work of the UN system is devoted to accomplishing this mandate."³⁶ This is handled by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), which has a coordinating role on behalf of the Secretary General. They coordinate amongst others, such important actors as the World Bank, the IMF, the UNDP, UNICEF and the WFP.

It is difficult to conclude on the UN's potential comprehensiveness other than saying it is truly comprehensive. The UN has a rich variety in resources, although they are not necessarily answering to one mandate or one commander, but the potential is there.³⁷

NATO's potential comprehensiveness

NATO has initially two sets of resources:

In accordance with the Treaty, the fundamental role of NATO is to safeguard the freedom and security of its member countries by political and military means. NATO safeguards the Allies' common values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and the peaceful resolution of disputes and promotes these values throughout the Euro-Atlantic area. It provides a forum in which countries from North America and Europe can consult together on security issues of common concern and take joint action in addressing them.³⁸

As NATO states in its handbook, their means are military and political, and in this lays implicit the resources they can bring forward to solve an international conflict. They may use diplomacy, such as communiqués and consultations with the parties to a conflict. In addition to this, it is important with the Partnership for Peace (PfP), the formal structures in connection with the collaboration with Russia and Ukraine, and their Mediterranean Dialogue.³⁹ Their main objective in this type of collaboration is:

The Alliance's policy of developing partnerships with a large number of non-member countries has played a key role in altering the strategic environment in the Euro-Atlantic area since the end of the Cold War. By promoting political dialogue and cooperation in a wide range of areas, different forms of partnership are helping to create a Euro-Atlantic security culture characterised by a strong determination to apply international cooperation to the task of tackling critical security challenges within and beyond the Euro-Atlantic community.

By stimulating and supporting defence reform in many Partner countries, Euro-Atlantic Partnership is also contributing to democratic transformation. It is helping to build modern, effective and democratically responsible armed forces and other defence institutions, and is assisting Partner countries to manage the social and material consequences of reforms.⁴⁰

Hence, NATO's political dimension has just as much of a preventive as a reconstructive function. Nevertheless, there is no reason to doubt NATO's will to use all of its political weight against parties to a conflict.

Military power is nonetheless NATO's primary resource, and a valuable asset is their command structure. Manned and trained in peacetime, and capable of leading operations all over the world. NATO has very few troops under command, unless they have been generated for a specific operation through a force generation process, a process that runs in parallel with, or is even a part of, the planning process⁴¹. In addition, the NATO Response Force is meant to give the NAC the tool it needs for crises management⁴².

Although military power is used for civilian tasks⁴³, NATO only has diplomacy in addition to military resources to help them resolve international conflicts. Thus, its potential for comprehensiveness is limited.

The EU's potential comprehensiveness

The Treaty states very clearly that the EU will participate both with civilian and military resources:

The common security and defence policy shall be an integral part of the common foreign and security policy. It shall provide the Union with an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets. The Union may use them on missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. The performance of these tasks shall be undertaken using capabilities provided by the Member States.⁴⁴

With its wide portfolio of tasks, the EU will have a broad spectre of resources to assist in international crises management, and they have decided to develop four prioritized areas⁴⁵. They are policing, where the EU is capable of any type of police task, such as assistance, training and replacement of local police forces. The second area is strengthening of the judicial system, where the EU can provide personnel to the prosecuting authority, judges and specialists to the penal institutions. The third area is civil administration, where the EU has a pool of experts within almost any branch. The fourth prioritized area for the EU is civilian security, sending comprehensive teams on short notice to any crisis area, the so called Civilian Response Teams. In the Civilian Headline Goal 2010, the EU stresses the importance of coordination with resources from the third pillar⁴⁶.

The EU's military capabilities are somehow limited compared to NATO, but with their two Battle groups on standby at all times, they have a possibility to react on short notice. Although Operation Atalanta is probably the operation that has given them the highest media coverage, their EUFOR Chad/RCA operation was even more challenging in many ways. This operation was launched with a mandate from the Security Council (resolution 1778), and is today run by the UN. By the 1st of March 2009, the EU had 13 ongoing operations, both military, police and judicial.

Another strong instrument of power for the EU is diplomacy. According to Eva Gross, Javier Solana, Secretary General [of the Council of the European Union](#) and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, "[...] has emerged as a highly visible and effective crisis manager and figurehead for EU foreign policy."⁴⁷ This visible position might, with the new title; the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, be even more so in the near future, with the power given in the Lisbon Treaty's article 27:

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who shall chair the Foreign Affairs Council, shall contribute through his proposals towards the preparation of the common foreign and security policy and shall ensure implementation of the decisions adopted by the European Council and the Council.

2. The High Representative shall represent the Union for matters relating to the common foreign and security policy. He shall conduct political dialogue with third parties on the Union's behalf and shall express the Union's position in international organisations and at international conferences.

With this mandate, calling the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for the EU's Minister of Foreign Affairs seems to be rather accurate.

The EU has substantial economic power too, and in article 208 of the Treaty they state their will and purpose when it comes to development cooperation:

1. Union policy in the field of development cooperation shall be conducted within the framework of the principles and objec-

tives of the Union's external action. The Union's development cooperation policy and that of the Member States complement and reinforce each other. Union development cooperation policy shall have as its primary objective the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty. The Union shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries.

2. The Union and the Member States shall comply with the commitments and take account of the objectives they have approved in the context of the United Nations and other competent international organisations.

To support these objectives, the European Investment Bank may grant loans to projects outside the EU's area. When it comes to humanitarian aid, responsibility rests with the European Community Humanitarian Aid Department, for many better known under the abbreviation; ECHO, an organization with a budget close to €800 million in 2007.

This shows that the EU has a truly comprehensive capability, with resources within all the main aspects of contemporary crisis management. They have many ongoing operations, they have both a civilian and a military rapid reaction capability, and on the military side, they have built up a command structure to command and control their operations without being dependent on NATO. With the Lisbon Treaty approved and a well functioning Political and Security Committee, giving prepared, competent and comprehensive advice to the Council, the EU has a very good potential for comprehensiveness in their approach.

Conclusion – the potential coherence and comprehensiveness

To sum up, the UN has the lowest score on potential coherence, but the highest score on comprehensive capabilities. NATO has full score on coherence, but the lowest score on comprehensiveness. The EU has a very good score on both coherence and comprehensiveness.

The biggest challenge for the UN is probably the lack of, or at least the lack of substantial coherence within the UN, because the UN is not one actor, with one goal and one commander. That is probably

why the UN calls itself the UN system, with more than 30 affiliated organizations, and that is probably why the UN Secretary General called their comprehensive approach for the UN's Integrated Approach⁴⁸. They have a job to do in order to improve their internal coherence, to strengthen their intra-agency coherence.

Regarding NATO, I believe it is wrong to use the word comprehensive about their capabilities. Coherence is probably amongst the highest one can have in an international organization, but their resources are far from comprehensive. The only way to solve this is of course to go inter-agency, which, evidently, will lead to a reduction in coherence.

The organization likely to have the best potential for an intra-agency comprehensive approach with a responsible coherence is the EU. This does not exclude the two other organizations to have success with their crises management internationally. Neither does it make the EU the number one trouble shooter on the international arena. The conflicts are too many and too complex, and there will beyond the horizon be a demand for all of them. And at the end of the day, it will always be the independent nation states of the world that must sacrifice some of their self determination, to cede power to a multinational organization. This will to sacrifice is not always very visible on the international arena. The most noticeable ism in the world today is not altruism.

When Richard Dawkins in 1976 published his book *The Selfish Gene*, he created the term meme as a unit of cultural information that propagates from one mind to another. His examples of memes are as varied as tunes, beliefs, fashion and knowledge. In International Relations the most common meme today must be the Comprehensive Approach. As Dawkins claims, memes evolve, some more successfully than others. For the Comprehensive Approach, evolution has its roots deep in strategy, especially the more modern version of strategy, describing all the state instruments of power. It will be interesting to follow the Comprehensive Approach the coming years, to see how this meme evolves. Maybe it will have a right to live, or maybe it will fade away. Nevertheless, the context of it will survive; the need to have a comprehensive approach to solve complex crises.

Notes

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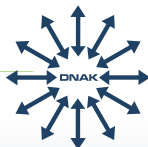
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