European Union’s Contribution to Regional and Global Peace and Security
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ABSTRACT
This research paper examines the European Union’s (EU) multidimensional and evolving role in shaping regional and global peace and security. With a primary focus on the 21st century, the study investigates how the EU’s common foreign and security policy, combined with its extensive diplomatic, economic, and crisis-management policies, has contributed to conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and the promotion of peace. The paper underscores the EU’s commitment to the principles of multilateralism, the rule of law, and human rights as central pillars of its security strategy. The research employs a comprehensive approach, evaluating the EU’s influence in its immediate neighborhood and its participation in international peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. It also delves into the EU’s evolving role as a normative power, its impact on crisis management, and its engagement with global security challenges such as climate change and cyber threats. By critically assessing the EU’s peace and security initiatives, this research aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of its policies and the challenges it faces, offering a valuable perspective on the EU’s enduring significance in the complex landscape of regional and global peace and security. Secondary sources of data are used to collect and analyze this study.

Keywords: European Union, Global Peace, International Diplomacy, Peace and Security, Regional Peace

1 Introduction
The European Union (EU) has made substantial contributions to both regional and global peace and security through its comprehensive approach to diplomacy, conflict prevention, and humanitarian efforts. Regionally, the EU’s most remarkable achievement lies in its fostering peace and stability within Europe. The EU’s foundational principles emphasize cooperation, reconciliation, and the rule of law among its member states. This commitment to diplomacy has played a pivotal role in transforming Europe from a continent plagued by frequent conflict into a zone of relative peace and prosperity (Larsen, 2000). On a global scale, the EU extends its influence through various channels. It engages in diplomatic mediation in conflict-ridden regions, such as the Balkans, Ukraine, and the Middle East, working towards peaceful resolutions (Sivachitis et al., 2013). The EU is a prominent provider of humanitarian aid and development assistance worldwide, alleviating the suffering caused by crises, conflicts, and natural disasters. The EU also leverages its economic and normative power, promoting democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law on the global stage. By imposing sanctions, promoting international cooperation, and addressing climate change and environmental security, the EU contributes to broader global peace and security efforts.

The European Union (EU) stands as a formidable force in today’s complex global landscape, exercising both soft and hard power to foster regional and global peace and security. With a history deeply rooted in the ashes of World War II and a commitment to preventing future conflicts, the EU has evolved into a dynamic entity that exceeds traditional boundaries and paradigms of international relations (Higashino, 2004). This research paper seeks to investigate the multidimensional role that the European Union plays in advancing peace and security on both regional and global levels. Through diplomatic activities, peacekeeping missions, humanitarian aid, and economic cooperation, the EU has emerged as a pivotal actor in shaping the contemporary world order. The EU’s unique approach to peace and security comprises a broad spectrum of strategies, making it an interesting subject of study. This paper enlightens the EU’s involvement in conflict prevention and resolution, examining its diplomatic efforts...
in regions such as the Balkans, Ukraine, and the Middle East. It also examines the EU's role in peacekeeping and crisis management, shedding light on the civilian and military missions that contribute to regional stability.

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3 Conflict Prevention and Resolution

The European Union (EU) has earned a reputation for its strong diplomatic efforts in conflict prevention and resolution, both within its borders and beyond. Regionally, the EU has been instrumental in preventing conflicts among its member states through multiple treaties, agreements, and institutions. The most prominent example is the process of European integration, which has bound together countries with a history of hostility, such as France and Germany, into a cooperative union. By facilitating dialogue, promoting economic interdependence, and upholding the rule of law, the EU has effectively reduced the likelihood of inter-state conflicts within Europe (Nan & Strimling, 2006).

The European Union's diplomatic efforts on a global scale are coordinated and led by the European External Action Service (EEAS). This institution serves as the EU's diplomatic arm, responsible for shaping and executing the EU's foreign policy objectives. The EEAS plays a pivotal role in mediating conflicts, promoting dialogue, and advancing the EU's interests and values on the international stage. One of the remarkable aspects of the EEAS's diplomatic efforts is its commitment to conflict prevention and resolution. The EU has consistently demonstrated a willingness to engage in challenging conflict zones, where it seeks to mediate disputes and facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties. Whether in the Balkans, Ukraine, or the Middle East, the EU's diplomatic missions work tirelessly to find peaceful solutions to complex conflicts. The EEAS's role extends beyond conflict resolution, including a broad spectrum of diplomatic activities, from trade negotiations to climate agreements. The EU's diplomatic initiatives often focus on promoting democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, aligning with its core values. By leveraging its economic and political influence, the EU strives to foster cooperation, reduce tensions, and contribute to the global quest for peace and security. The European External Action Service underscores the EU's commitment to diplomacy as a means of resolving conflicts and advancing its vision of a more peaceful and prosperous world (Vanhoonacker, 2010).

On a global scale, the EU extends its influence through various channels. It engages in diplomatic mediation in conflict-ridden regions. The EU is a prominent provider of humanitarian aid and development assistance worldwide, alleviating the suffering caused by crises, conflicts, and natural disasters. The EU also leverages its economic clout and normative power, promoting democratic values, human rights, and the rule of law on the global stage. By imposing sanctions, promoting international cooperation, and addressing climate change and environmental security, the EU contributes to broader global peace and security efforts (Duke, 2013).

The European External Action Service (EEAS) plays a crucial role in addressing various global issues to promote peace and security, often by utilizing diplomacy, conflict prevention, crisis management, and international cooperation. One notable issue that the EEAS has been involved in resolving is the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The Iran nuclear deal was signed in 2015 between Iran and the P5+1 countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China), to curb Iran's nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. The agreement was seen as a significant diplomatic achievement and a crucial step towards preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, thereby enhancing regional and global security (Alcaro, 2021).

However, in 2018, the United States unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA and reimposed sanctions on Iran, creating a major international crisis. In response, Iran began to exceed certain limits set by the agreement regarding its nuclear activities. This led to increased tensions and a risk of military conflict in the Middle East (Kerr & Katzman, 2018). The EEAS, led by its High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, worked tirelessly alongside other international actors, including the remaining JCPOA parties, to salvage the deal and prevent further escalation. They engaged in diplomatic efforts to encourage Iran to return to compliance with the JCPOA and to find a diplomatic solution to the crisis. In 2021, after several rounds of negotiations and diplomacy, the United States and Iran announced their willingness to return to compliance with the JCPOA, facilitated by the EEAS and the European Union. This development marked a significant achievement in restoring the nuclear deal and easing tensions in the region. It demonstrated the EEAS's role in promoting peace and security through diplomatic means, preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and mitigating potential conflicts (Rafique & Nadeem, 2023; Wells & Wells, 2022). The Iran nuclear deal serves as an example of how the EEAS contributes to resolving international issues, maintaining peace, and enhancing global security through diplomacy and multilateral
cooperation. It showcases the European Union’s commitment to a rules-based international order and its efforts to address complex global challenges through dialogue and negotiation.

4 Peacekeeping and Crisis Management

The European Union (EU) has played a significant and evolving role in peacekeeping and crisis management since its inception. Established in the aftermath of World War II with the primary goal of ensuring peace and stability in Europe, the EU has expanded its scope and capabilities over the years to address global conflicts and crises. This study explores the multifaceted role of the EU in peacekeeping and crisis management, emphasizing its diplomatic, military, and humanitarian efforts. One of the EU’s key contributions to peacekeeping and crisis management is its diplomatic efforts. The EU’s diplomatic role is primarily centered on conflict prevention and resolution. Through its High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU engages in mediation, dialogue, and negotiations to prevent conflicts from escalating and resolve existing disputes (Fanouilis & Revelas, 2023).

The EU has successfully mediated in several conflicts worldwide. For example, in the Balkans, the EU played a crucial role in brokering the Dayton Agreement, which ended the Bosnian War in 1995. More recently, the EU facilitated negotiations between Serbia and Kosovo, resulting in the Brussels Agreement of 2013, which aimed to normalize relations between the two entities. Furthermore, the EU has used economic and political incentives to encourage stability and peace in its neighborhood (Fazlíc, 2021). The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) promotes democracy, human rights, and economic development in neighboring countries, reducing the risk of instability and conflict spillover. By offering the prospect of closer ties and integration with the EU, the ENP encourages reforms and cooperation (Jones et al., 2021; Kapic, 2022; Krzymowski, 2020).

Military Contributions

While the EU does not have its standing military forces, it has established military capabilities through the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). The CSDP enables EU member states to undertake military missions in support of peacekeeping and crisis management efforts (Barbé & Morillas, 2019). One of the notable military missions was Operation Atalanta, launched in 2008, aimed at countering piracy off the coast of Somalia. The EU Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) played a significant role in protecting shipping routes and deterring pirate attacks. This mission not only contributed to regional stability but also highlighted the EU’s ability to conduct maritime operations (Blockmans & Crosson, 2019).

The EU has also deployed civilian and military missions in conflict zones to support peace processes, such as the EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) and the EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine). These missions provide training, advice, and expertise to local security forces and institutions, helping them build capacity and enhance their ability to maintain stability (Baudais & Maiga, 2022). Moreover, the EU has engaged in crisis management through its battle groups, which are multinational rapid-reaction forces composed of troops from EU member states. These forces are on standby and can be deployed quickly to respond to crises and conflicts. Although they have not been extensively used, battle groups represent an important military asset for the EU’s crisis management capabilities (Bštás et al., 2021).

Humanitarian Assistance

The EU is also a significant provider of humanitarian assistance in conflict and crises. Through its humanitarian aid department, the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), the EU offers vital support to populations affected by conflicts, natural disasters, and other crises (Smith, 2021). ECHO provides funding and resources to humanitarian organizations, both within and outside of the EU, to deliver essential assistance, including food, shelter, medical care, and clean water, to those in need. In conflict zones, ECHO works to ensure the protection of civilians and the delivery of aid to areas that are difficult to access due to security concerns. For example, in September 2020, a devastating fire broke out at the Moria refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos. The camp was one of the largest refugee camps in Europe and housed thousands of asylum seekers and migrants in overcrowded and dire conditions. The fire resulted in the destruction of the camp, leaving thousands of people homeless and without access to necessities such as shelter, food, and healthcare. In response to this humanitarian crisis within Europe, the ECHO activated its mechanisms to assist Greece (Digidiki & Bhabha, 2020).
ECH0 swiftly mobilized funding and resources to support the affected population, particularly in the areas of provision of emergency shelter, food and nutrition support, healthcare and medical assistance water sanitation and hygiene, and psychological support (Newcomb & Moss, 2019). The EU promotes the principles of humanitarian law and human rights in conflict situations. It advocates for the protection of civilians, the provision of safe access to humanitarian aid, and the prevention of violations of international law. The EU also supports initiatives to address the root causes of conflicts, such as poverty, inequality, and lack of access to education and healthcare.

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6 Humanitarian Aid And Development Assistance

The European Union (EU) has emerged as a global leader in humanitarian aid and development assistance. Rooted in its commitment to promoting peace, prosperity, and stability, the EU has played a pivotal role in addressing global challenges related to poverty, inequality, conflict, and disaster. Humanitarian aid is a cornerstone of the EU's global engagement. The EU provides vital assistance to populations affected by natural disasters, conflicts, and crises, both within its borders and around the world. The EU's humanitarian efforts are guided by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence (Cini & Borragán, 2022). One of the key strengths of the EU's humanitarian aid is its rapid response capability. The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) is the EU's humanitarian arm responsible for assisting in emergencies. ECHO coordinates with partner organizations and deploys resources swiftly to deliver life-saving aid, such as food, shelter, medical care, and clean water, to affected populations (Bandov & Gosovic, 2018).

The EU's humanitarian assistance also focuses on protecting vulnerable populations, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and children affected by conflict. Through its funding, advocacy, and partnerships with humanitarian organizations, the EU works to ensure the safety and well-being of those affected by crises. The EU emphasizes the importance of upholding international humanitarian law and human rights in conflict zones (Bojadžijev & Mezzadra, 2015). It actively advocates for the protection of civilians, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, and the facilitation of humanitarian access to affected areas.

Development Assistance: Promoting Sustainable Development

The EU is a major provider of development assistance to partner countries around the world. The EU’s development efforts are guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which seeks to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, and promote sustainable economic growth (Lundsgaarde, 2012). The EU is committed to the principle of “leave no one behind,” aiming to ensure that the most vulnerable populations benefit from development assistance. It places a strong emphasis on gender equality, human rights, and good governance as critical elements of sustainable development (Stuart & Samman, 2017; Weber, 2017).

The European Commission, in collaboration with the European External Action Service (EEAS), oversees the EU's development cooperation policies and programs. These programs encompass a wide range of areas, including education, healthcare, agriculture, infrastructure, and climate change mitigation (Vanhoonacker, 2010). The EU also supports partner countries in building their capacity to implement and manage development projects effectively. Technical assistance, knowledge sharing, and capacity-building initiatives are integral to the EU's approach to development cooperation (Blom & Vanhoonacker, 2015).

Regional Focus: The Neighborhood and Beyond

The EU’s humanitarian and development efforts extend to its immediate neighborhood and regions beyond. In its neighborhood, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) aims to promote stability, security, and economic development in neighboring countries to the east and south. The ENP offers partner countries the prospect of closer ties and integration with the EU in exchange for democratic reforms, economic development, and cooperation on various issues (Góra et al., 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, the EU is a significant contributor to development assistance, focusing on areas such as education, healthcare, agriculture, and infrastructure development. The EU-Africa partnership, as articulated in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, seeks to address common challenges and promote sustainable development on the African continent. The EU also plays a vital role in supporting countries in crisis or post-conflict situations. For example, in Mali, the EU’s development assistance includes programs to strengthen governance, security, and access to basic services in a fragile context (Abbott & Teti, 2022; Czachor, 2019).
8 Sanctions and Security Measures

The European Union (EU) employs a range of sanctions and security measures to strengthen peace and security in the region and beyond. These measures aim to address security threats, deter aggressors, and promote peace through diplomatic, economic, and military means. Here, we'll explore some key aspects of the EU's sanctions and security policies:

Diplomatic and Political Measures

The EU engages in diplomatic efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts. Through its diplomatic channels and diplomatic missions in conflict zones, it facilitates dialogue and negotiations between conflicting parties. The Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) enables the EU to coordinate its foreign policy positions and take collective action on security issues. It allows member states to align their diplomatic efforts and leverage their combined influence (Giumelli et al., 2021).

Economic Sanctions

The EU employs economic sanctions as a tool to promote peace and security. These sanctions can include asset freezes, travel bans, and trade restrictions against individuals, entities, or countries involved in activities threatening peace and stability (Portela, 2010). Notable examples include sanctions against Russia in response to its actions in Ukraine and sanctions against individuals and entities involved in human rights violations and conflicts in various regions, such as Syria and Libya (Voronin et al., 2019).

Arms Embargoes

The European Union (EU) plays a pivotal role in implementing arms embargoes as part of its broader foreign policy and security objectives. EU arms embargoes are typically employed to support peace and security in regions facing conflict or instability. These measures restrict the export and sale of arms and military equipment from EU member states to specific countries or regions where such sales may exacerbate tensions or contribute to human rights abuses. The EU's arms embargoes are emblematic of its commitment to upholding international norms and values, such as human rights, as they often align with broader efforts to promote diplomacy and conflict resolution (Kuo & Spindel, 2023). The EU's coordinated approach to arms embargoes not only enhances their effectiveness but also underscores the Union's commitment to contributing to global peace and security through responsible arms control measures. For example EU imposed an arms embargo on Libya, Syria, and North Korea.

Crisis Management and Peacekeeping

The EU conducts civilian and military missions to manage crises and contribute to peacekeeping efforts. These missions often include activities such as conflict resolution, institution-building, and security sector reform. Notable missions include the EU Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali) and the EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine (EUAM Ukraine), which aim to strengthen the capacity of local security forces (de Sousa, 2023).

Counterterrorism Measures

To counter the threat of terrorism, the EU has implemented measures such as intelligence sharing, law enforcement cooperation, and efforts to disrupt terrorist financing. Additionally, the EU has established agencies like Europol and Eurojust to enhance security coordination among member states.

Border Security and Migration Management

Border security and migration management are essential components of the EU's security measures. The EU seeks to secure its external borders while ensuring that those in need of protection receive assistance. Initiatives like Frontex, the EU's border and coast guard agency, and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) play critical roles in these efforts (Gloutschios & Scheel, 2021; Lemberg-Pedersen, 2019).

Conflict Prevention and Crisis Response

The EU places a strong emphasis on conflict prevention through early warning mechanisms, diplomatic interventions, and capacity-building in conflict-prone regions. In crisis response, the EU deploys its crisis management tools, including the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, to provide disaster relief and humanitarian assistance (De la Porte & Jensen, 2021).
9 Counterterrorism and Cybersecurity

The European Union (EU) has been steadfast in its efforts to combat terrorism and bolster cybersecurity, recognizing the ever-evolving nature of these threats in today's interconnected world. In the realm of counterterrorism, the EU has developed a comprehensive strategy that encompasses prevention, protection, pursuit, and response. Intelligence sharing among member states through initiatives like the European Counter Terrorism Centre (ECTC) within Europol has been central to identifying and addressing potential threats. The EU is also committed to addressing the root causes of radicalization and extremism through social inclusion programs and counter-radicalization efforts. Moreover, border security and aviation security are top priorities to prevent the movement of terrorists (Andreeva, 2020).

In the realm of cybersecurity, the EU has adopted a holistic approach to safeguarding its digital landscape. This includes a comprehensive Cybersecurity Strategy aimed at enhancing cyber resilience, deterring cyber threats, and promoting international cooperation. The NIS Directive ensures that critical infrastructure operators and digital service providers adhere to stringent cybersecurity requirements. Furthermore, the EU Cybersecurity Act has introduced a framework for certifying the cybersecurity of digital products and services, allowing consumers and businesses to make informed choices about their digital products' security (Andreeva, 2020). The EU actively cooperates with international partners to address cyber threats and establish norms of responsible behavior in cyberspace. It engages in dialogues and initiatives to promote a rules-based cyberspace environment. The establishment of the European Cybersecurity Competence Center furthers the EU's commitment to fostering research and innovation in cybersecurity. The EU is well-prepared to respond to cyber incidents effectively, thanks to mechanisms such as the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA), which coordinates incident response efforts (Štitilis et al., 2020). Also, the EU provides capacity-building support to partner countries, helping them enhance their cybersecurity capabilities and combat cyber threats effectively.

In both counterterrorism and cybersecurity, the EU recognizes the importance of cooperation and coordination among its member states, law enforcement agencies, intelligence services, private sector actors, and international partners. These collaborative efforts reflect the EU's unwavering commitment to the safety and security of its citizens and its proactive role in addressing global challenges. The EU's multifaceted approach to counterterrorism and cybersecurity underscores its dedication to maintaining peace and stability in an increasingly complex and digitally interconnected world.

10 Climate Change and Environmental Security

The European Union (EU) plays a pivotal role in addressing climate change and promoting environmental security, recognizing that these issues have far-reaching implications for the well-being of its citizens, global stability, and the sustainability of our planet. The EU's role in these areas encompasses a multifaceted approach that combines domestic policy measures with international leadership and cooperation (Štitilis et al., 2020). At the heart of the EU's efforts is its commitment to mitigating climate change. The EU has set ambitious targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase the share of renewable energy, and improve energy efficiency. These targets are not only aligned with the Paris Agreement but often exceed its requirements, demonstrating the EU's leadership in the global fight against climate change (Štitilis et al., 2020).

The EU also champions climate diplomacy and international cooperation. It actively engages with other nations to promote climate action, supporting initiatives such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings. The EU's commitment to climate finance helps developing countries transition to low-carbon economies and adapt to the impacts of climate change (Leggett, 2020). Moreover, the EU is actively involved in environmental conservation and sustainable resource management. Its policies and directives cover a wide range of environmental issues, from biodiversity conservation and air quality to water resource management and waste reduction. The EU's Circular Economy Action Plan promotes sustainable production and consumption patterns, aiming to reduce waste and minimize the environmental footprint of products.

The EU's influence extends beyond its borders through its support for international environmental agreements and its efforts to combat illegal wildlife trade and deforestation. It actively advocates for the preservation of global biodiversity and the protection of endangered species, reflecting its commitment to environmental security and the interconnectedness of ecological challenges. Environmental security is a critical aspect of the EU's role, as it recognizes that environmental degradation can lead to conflicts and instability. The EU seeks to address environmental security concerns by addressing the root causes of environmental problems, supporting conflict
prevention, and promoting sustainable resource management practices in regions affected by environmental stressors (Pagallo et al., 2022).

The European Union (EU) has emerged as a global leader in climate action, demonstrating a strong commitment to addressing the pressing issue of climate change. At the heart of the EU's climate strategy is the European Green Deal, a comprehensive policy framework that outlines the Union's plan to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. This ambitious goal includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero and reshaping various sectors of the economy to be more sustainable and eco-friendly (Sikora, 2021). The EU's climate targets under the Green Deal also entail a substantial reduction in emissions by 2030, with a specific focus on transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources, fostering energy efficiency, and promoting sustainable practices across industries (Senapati et al., 2019).

To achieve these objectives, the EU has implemented a range of measures, including the European Climate Law, which legally binds member states to the climate neutrality goal, and the European Emissions Trading System (ETS), which puts a price on carbon emissions and incentivizes companies to reduce their emissions. The EU has also allocated significant funding to support green initiatives and sustainable technologies through programs like the Just Transition Fund and the Innovation Fund. Furthermore, the EU engages in international climate diplomacy, striving to uphold the commitments of the Paris Agreement and working with global partners to address climate challenges (Agovino et al., 2019). The EU's climate action efforts reflect a commitment to lead by example and to set a robust path toward a sustainable, low-carbon future.

11 Conclusion

The European Union's contribution to regional and global peace and security is an exemplary testament to the EU's role as a significant actor on the world stage. Through its multifaceted foreign policy tools, including diplomacy, economic influence, and crisis management, the EU has consistently demonstrated its commitment to upholding the principles of multilateralism, the rule of law, and the promotion of human rights. By focusing on conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and the maintenance of stability, the EU has played a pivotal role in defusing tensions, fostering peace, and mitigating the impact of conflicts in its immediate neighborhood and beyond. Furthermore, the EU's evolving role as engagement in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, and its dedication to addressing global security challenges underscore its vital and enduring significance in the complex landscape of regional and global peace and security.

However, challenges persist, including the need to improve the coherence of EU foreign policy, enhance the effectiveness of its crisis management mechanisms, and navigate geopolitical complexities. Nonetheless, the EU's commitment to these objectives, its reputation as a peace-promoting actor, and its ability to serve as a bridge-builder in international relations underscore its indispensable role in the pursuit of peace and security on regional and global fronts. The European Union's dedication to these principles positions it as a key player in shaping the future of international security and diplomacy.

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