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Enhanced European Union–Australia security cooperation through crisis management

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ABSTRACT

Since January 2003, the European Union (EU) has launched over 30 civilian and military crisis management missions under the Common Security and Defence Policy. These missions have involved the participation of both EU member states and third states. In order to help facilitate the participation of third states in these missions, the EU established the Framework Partnership Agreements on crisis management, setting out the legal framework for third-state participation. In April 2015, Australia became the seventeenth country to sign such an agreement with the EU. This agreement reflects both the common interest and values shared by Australia and the EU and the extent to which EU–Australia relations have evolved and deepened over the years. In addition, the increased engagement and socialisation of Australian military and civilian personnel with individual EU member states through their participation in such operations as the International Security Assistance Force operation in Afghanistan, led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the Combined Maritime Force have further facilitated opportunities for security cooperation at the EU level. Shared concerns and interests on counterterrorism, counter-piracy, instability and capacity-building have also opened up opportunities for increased cooperation between the EU and Australia. This article assesses the significance of the Framework Partnership Agreements on crisis management for EU–Australia relations within the area of security cooperation, and examines future prospects for cooperation.

KEYWORDS

Common Security and Defence Policy; crisis management; EU–Australia relations; security

Introduction

Since January 2003, the European Union (EU) has launched over 30 civilian and military crisis management missions and operations under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). Their mandates have covered such tasks as peacekeeping, monitoring and mentoring, security sector reform, rule of law, counter-piracy and capacity-building. These missions and operations have seen the participation of both EU member states and third states. In order to help facilitate the participation of third states in these missions and operations, the EU established the Framework Partnership Agreements (FPAs) on crisis management in 2004, setting out the legal framework for third-state participation. In

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April 2015, Australia became the seventeenth country to sign an FPA with the EU (Australian Government and EU 2015).

The signing of the FPA represents an important step in deepening security cooperation between the EU and Australia, and illustrates the extent to which the relationship has evolved and deepened since the start of diplomatic relations in 1962. Initially focused on economic issues, the expanding competences of the EU and the increased interaction between the EU and Australia have allowed the relationship to become more comprehensive in nature. As Murray (2016) has argued, the EU–Australia relationship has developed to become strategic in all but name. Recognition of shared common interests and values in contributing to global peace and stability has helped facilitate this. The 'close historical, political, economic and cultural ties', along with 'their shared commitment to the respect for and promotion of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law' (Australian Government and EU 2008, 3), have become the basis of this relationship. This has been formalised in several agreements signed between the EU and Australia since the 1997 Joint Declaration (see Australian Government and EU 1997, 2008, 2017). In assessing the FPA, a Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT 2015, 3) report acknowledged that: 'The proposed Agreement would be an important element in the Australia–EU bilateral relationship, strengthening the already broad-based cooperation on security and development matters'. DFAT acknowledged that the FPA would 'add a new dimension to the Australia–EU strategic relationship' (ibid.), thus illustrating the growing importance of the relationship. It also builds on Australia's long-standing commitment to crisis management through its involvement in peacekeeping and post-conflict stabilisation missions in the Asia-Pacific and Africa.[1] During her trip to Brussels in September 2016, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, reaffirmed 'Australia's commitment to deeper, broader, more diverse cooperation with the European Union' (Bishop and Ciobo 2016).

This article assesses the evolution of the EU–Australia security relationship, with a specific focus on crisis management cooperation facilitated through the FPA. It argues that both Australia and the EU see each other as security partners for tackling shared regional and global challenges. Although not the most important security relationship for either Australia or the EU, the evolving relationship reflects a recognition that in certain areas they can work together. It thus provides an opportunity for Australia and the EU to strengthen their security engagement. The challenge for both the EU and Australia in the coming years will be to capitalise on the opportunities that arise, and translate such commitment into tangible actions. A key driver in deepening security engagement will be the political willingness of both Australia and the EU to translate policy and rhetoric into action.

Although neither the EU nor Australia has recognised the other as a key strategic partner, they have both acknowledged the importance of working with like-minded international partners to tackle common challenges at the international level. In 2011, the then EU Ambassador to Australia, David Daly (2011), pointed out that underlying the stronger bilateral relationship between the EU and Australia 'is the recognition that cooperating with like-minded partners greatly matters: it is easier working with partners which share the same fundamental democratic values' (Australian Government and EU 2017, Article 5.1.). In building on the years of engagement, the Framework Agreement, which was signed in August 2017, identifies several key areas to strengthen security cooperation.

Within the area of crisis management, this includes a shared commitment to 'cooperating in promoting international peace and stability'. Other key security areas in which the EU and Australia seek to build on existing engagement include countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons; working together to prevent and fight against terrorism and facilitate cooperation; and the exchange of views in the field of international security and cyberspace (Australian Government and EU 2017).

The signing of the FPA is in part a recognition by the EU that Australia can make significant contributions to its crisis management operations in areas where interests and concerns converge. The decision of the Australian government to conclude the FPA with the EU marks a recognition on the part of the government that the EU has become another avenue through which it can actively contribute to regional and international security challenges. It also is a by-product of the increased engagement and socialisation that Australian military and civilian personnel have had with counterparts from individual EU member states. Australia's participation in such operations as the International Security Assistance Force operation in Afghanistan, led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Combined Maritime Force, deployed in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea, has helped to further facilitate opportunities for security cooperation at the EU level. Within the 2008 Partnership Framework, both the EU and Australia recognised that 'effective international cooperation' is required to deal with the challenges of globalisation 'in an increasingly interdependent world' (Australian Government and EU 2008). Shared concerns and interests on counterterrorism, counter-piracy, instability caused by failing states and capacity-building have allowed for the EU and Australia to identify tangible opportunities for such increased cooperation. The challenge for both the EU and Australia in the coming years will be to capitalise on these opportunities and demonstrate their commitment to the relationship by jointly working together.

The article is divided into four main sections. The first section assesses the nature of EU–Australia security cooperation. It will demonstrate how the relationship has evolved since the EU was given competency to discuss security and defence matters following the entry into force of the Treaty on European Union in 1993. It thus provides an overview of some of the key areas in which the EU and Australia have developed solid working relationships reflecting their shared interests in tackling regional and global security challenges. The second section focuses on how the EU has become a crisis manager and how it has developed and nurtured its engagement with third states within this area. The third section examines the decision of the EU and Australia to formalise cooperation within the area of crisis management with the signing of the FPA. In addition, it analyses Australia's participation in its first CSDP mission European Union Mission on Regional Maritime Capacity Building in the Horn of Africa (EUCAP Nestor). The final section considers opportunities and challenges for driving crisis management collaboration between the EU and Australia. It will identify areas where, due to their shared interests, Australia could contribute to further CSDP missions.

EU–Australia security cooperation

Security had for a long time remained outside of the EU's scope. It was not until the signing of the Single European Act in 1986 that economic aspects of security were

discussed within the European Community. With the ratification of the Treaty on European Union in 1993, all aspects of security and defence were finally brought within the remit of the EU, though within an intergovernmental capacity. These developments reflected the move by the EU and its member states to broaden the EU's international role beyond trade and aid to become a comprehensive international actor. This desire became even more pronounced within the immediate aftermath of the Cold War. European leaders saw it as an opportunity for the EU to take on greater responsibility for both regional and global issues. The expansion of the EU's competence within the areas of foreign policy, security and defence provided the EU with the opportunity to broaden its engagements with third states via bilateral, regional and multilateral interaction to work together on shared interests. It allowed third states to engage with the EU beyond economic and trade matters. It also meant that the EU and third states were able to identify new areas for cooperation based on common interests, thus expanding their ties.

Both the EU and Australia have acknowledged in policy documents and speeches the importance of working with international partners on key strategic issues. In the 2003 'European Security Strategy', the EU underscored that it needed to pursue its security objectives 'both through multilateral cooperation in international organisations and through partnerships with key actors' (Council of the European Union 2003, 13), which included states 'who share our goals and values, and are prepared to act in their support' (14). More recently, in its June 2016 'Global Strategy', the EU (2016, 18) has stated that it 'will work with core partners, like-minded countries and regional groupings' to undertake its global responsibilities and tackle global challenges. Although not directly mentioned in these two documents, as they focused on the threats facing the EU, the EU and Australia regard each other as 'likeminded partners on the international stage' on a multitude of issues, including security (see Mogherini and Bishop 2015).

Likewise, Australia has also acknowledged the importance of international partners in dealing with security issues. Australia's relationship with the USA remains the cornerstone of its security and defence policy. The Australian government (2016, 15) regards the USA as 'Australia's most important strategic partner'. The USA is also the EU's most important strategic partner, having provided the security umbrella for Western Europe during the Cold War, and it continues to be at the centre of the EU's global security partnerships. But this has not precluded Australia from developing strong partnerships with other regional and global actors. As Carr (2015, 3) points out, Australia's approach is firmly based on the belief that the best response to international and regional instability is to work with states with 'similar interests and most importantly similar values'. This was most recently outlined in the government's *2016 Defence White Paper* and *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, where the government reaffirmed that strengthening its alliance with the USA and regional and international partners is an important part of the government's strategy for tackling shared security challenges such as terrorism (Australian Government 2016, 9, 2017). Thus, within the Australian context, partnerships, alliances and ad hoc coalitions with like-minded actors such as the EU are regarded as important for national, regional and global stability.

As a regional body with no military capabilities of its own, the EU is not a security actor in the traditional sense of the term. It does not have the ability, or the desire, to project military power for the protection of territorial defence. Rather, the EU has developed

into a significant security actor, especially within the sphere of non-traditional security, using a multitude of policies, ranging from development to trade and diplomacy, to facilitate peace and stability beyond its borders. For the EU, security is defined more broadly than traditional concepts of security that focus on the protection of sovereignty and the territorial integrity of states from external threats. It covers the broad range of threats to the security of individuals as encompassed under the concept of human security. Although the EU is both a regional and international security actor, its capacity to act and its ability to add value and improve the security situation have varied. This is most evident with the CSDP military operations and civilian missions.

The EU presents itself as a unique global partner to its interlocutors due to what it refers to as its comprehensive approach in foreign policy and security. According to the EU, this comprehensive approach allows it and its member states to 'combine, in a coherent and consistent manner', a wide range of policies and tools in its foreign policy engagements (Council of the European Union 2014) to deal with an issue from multiple angles. Unlike other regional bodies such as the United Nations (UN), NATO and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the level of political and economic integration that has taken place within the EU has meant that it is able to deal with complex issues with a multitude of mechanisms, ranging from trade agreements and market access to military and civilian crisis management operations (see Drent 2011; Johannsen 2011; Pirozzi 2013). Its uniqueness has meant that 'the EU stands alone' in its capacity to respond and provide assistance in dealing with international security threats (Smith 2017, 3). Pagani (1998) pointed out that due to the programs and actions at the EU's disposal, it has an added advantage over other organisations by providing continuity throughout the conflict cycle. In addition, where EU member states have agreed on a unified EU response, they will complement EU actions and policies by adopting policies that reflect this unified EU approach.

Within the Asia-Pacific region, and especially since 2012, the uniqueness of the EU has been a key message from EU officials. In 2013, the then High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (hereafter High Representative), Catherine Ashton (2013, 2), stated that the EU's comprehensive approach meant that it was able to combine its 'hard and soft power to achieve lasting security and prosperity', making it 'a unique global partner for Asia on security issues'. This message was also reinforced by Federica Mogherini when she gave her first speech as the new High Representative at the Shangri-La Security Dialogue conference in May 2015. Mogherini (2015) urged the EU's Asian partners not just to regard the EU as a 'big free-trade area', but also to consider the EU as a 'foreign policy community, a security and defence provider' in the region. Asian perceptions of the EU as a major security player remain constrained by the nature of the security threats facing the region, such as the nuclear threat posed by North Korea and the territorial disputes in the South China Sea (see Stumbaum 2014). However, as Reiterer (2016) points out, it is within such non-traditional security areas as disaster relief, mediation and crisis response that the EU is developing a security presence in the region among Asian interlocutors.

Through the role that the EU has played within the area of crisis management, it has become a key actor 'both generically and through specific niche capabilities' (Tardy 2015, 48). Australia's participation in the EU's civilian CSDP mission EUCAP Nestor between 2014 and 2015, and the signing of the FPA in 2015, demonstrates that Australia

sees the EU as playing an important role in helping to bring about peace and stability through non-traditional security activities. The former Australian Minister for Defence, Stephen Smith, acknowledged that the 'EU is a key player in international efforts to address' such threats as piracy off the Horn of Africa (Smith and Rudd 2011).

Australia recognises that the EU is an important security actor and partner. Since the end of the Cold War, and especially following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the USA, the EU and Australia have taken steps to broaden their security engagement. Cooperation has focused on such areas as law enforcement, counterterrorism, data sharing, and the promotion of peace and stability. Australia's *2016 Defence White Paper* identified six key drivers that will shape Australia's security environment in the next 20 years. Among these are 'challenges to the stability of a rules-based global order', the continuing threat of terrorism, state fragility, and the rise of 'new complex, non geographic threats' (Australian Government 2016, 40–41). These and similar concerns have also been flagged by the EU (2016) within its 'Global Strategy', thus paving the way for enhanced engagement to meet their respective national and regional security priorities.

Within the areas of law enforcement and counterterrorism, the EU and Australia are party to several agreements. Australia and EUROPOL (the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation) signed an operational agreement in February 2007 to facilitate the exchange of strategic and operational information (including personal data) between the Australian Federal Police and EUROPOL (Australian Government and EU 2007). This agreement facilitates joint efforts aimed at dealing with terrorism and transnational crimes such as human trafficking, illegal immigrant smuggling and unlawful drug trafficking. At the regional level, the EU, through the European Commission and individual EU member states, has supported the joint Australia–Indonesia Jakarta Centre for Law Enforcement Cooperation. The Centre was established to enhance the expertise of South-East Asian law enforcement agencies in combating terrorism and transnational crime, and enhancing regional cooperation in these areas. The facilitation of further regional 'counter-terrorist activities through capacity building projects' (Australian Government and EU 2008) has been identified as an area for ongoing cooperation (Australian Government and EU 2017).

The EU and Australia have also cooperated on border security through the Passenger Name Record Agreement, concluded in July 2011 (Australian Government and EU 2011). The Agreement, which came into force in June 2012, allows for information on travellers flying into Australia on airlines using EU-based information technology service providers to be disclosed to Australian customs officials. The data provided under this agreement is used to assist Australia's border security efforts to combat terrorism and serious crimes.

Counterterrorism has become an important aspect of EU–Australia security cooperation. Both EU member states and Australia have experienced the destructive effects of terrorist acts against their citizens. Through political dialogue, exchange of information on terrorist groups and working together to develop a comprehensive international effort to fight against terrorism through the UN, the EU and Australia have committed to working together to find effective ways to 'fight against terrorism in full respect for the rule of law and human rights' (Australian Government and EU 2017, Article 9.1). As terrorism represents a global challenge, collaboration between the EU and Australia is undertaken at multiple levels—bilateral, regional and multilateral.

In addition, Australia and the EU signed a 'Security of Classified Information' agreement in January 2010. The agreement facilitates the exchange of classified information and aims to 'strengthen bilateral and multilateral dialogue and cooperation in support of shared foreign security policy and security interests' (Australia Government and EU 2010). This has been reinforced in the Framework Agreement.

Australia has continued to have strong bilateral security and defence relationships with several EU member states. It has signed defence procurement contracts with defence companies from several EU member states, such as Spain and France. For example, in April 2016, the Australian government announced that Direction des Constructions Navales Services, a French naval shipbuilding company, had been selected as the preferred international partner for Australia's Future Submarine Program.

Australia has developed strong security relationships with EU member states within the Asia-Pacific region. Under the FRANZ Agreement, Australia, France and New Zealand coordinate their humanitarian and disaster relief operations (for example, following Tropical Cyclone Pam in 2015, defence personnel worked alongside each other to provide humanitarian assistance). Australia's longest-standing bilateral relationship with the UK has seen them engage within the region in intelligence sharing (the 'Five-Eyes' alliance) and defence cooperation (the Five Power Defence Arrangement). This was reinforced in the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, which identified these formal alliances as essential to Australia's security engagement in South-East Asia (Australian Government 2017, 6, 44).

Australia has worked closely with military and civilian personnel from other EU states as part of the US-led operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and through Australia's increased involvement as a partner state with NATO. At the inaugural Australia–Germany 2 + 2 Ministerial Meeting in September 2016, Germany and Australia announced that they would continue, through the Resolute Support Mission, to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, and cooperate in supporting development and stabilisation in Afghanistan (see Steinmeier *et al.* 2016).

Thus, through a series of agreements with the EU and bilateral agreements and engagement with individual EU member states, Australia has developed significant security and defence ties with European interlocutors. These relationships reflect Australia's pragmatic approach to security (see Carr 2015). The FPA provides Australia with another avenue through which to engage internationally while strengthening relations with the EU. In addition, although Brexit will see Australia's longest-term partner leave the EU, Australia will be able to apply its pragmatic approach to nurture its bilateral relationship with the UK, the EU and its member states.

The EU as a crisis manager

Within the EU, crisis management covers those actions designed 'to prevent the eruption or escalation of conflicts' and those aimed at consolidating 'peace and internal stability in a period of transition' (European Council 2000b, Appendix 3). It straddles the three stages of the conflict cycle (the pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict phases). It contains elements of conflict prevention, through its attempt to stop tensions escalating into violent conflict; crisis management, in responding to the outbreak of violent conflicts; and post-conflict stabilisation, by assisting state transition into peaceful, stable and democratic states. The EU's crisis management actions aim to defuse tension,

prevent its escalation and contribute to an environment in which a peaceful settlement can be achieved. Within the CSDP context, activities that can be conducted by the EU include:

> joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping tasks, tasks of combat forces in crisis management, including peace-making and post-conflict stabilisation. All these tasks may contribute to the fight against terrorism, including by supporting third countries in combating terrorism in their territories (EU 2008, Article 43).

These tasks reflect the changing global context since 9/11, with the War on Terror, the rise in instability and state failure, and the inability of states in conflict zones to provide the basic levels of peace and stability. Although the effectiveness of the EU's CSDP missions has varied over the years, there is little question that the EU has become an important regional and global crisis management actor (see Whitman and Wolff 2012).

Since the establishment of the CSDP in 1999 and its subsequent development, the issue of third-state involvement in CSDP operations has been discussed by EU member states (see European Council 1999, 2000a; Fraterman 2006; Webber *et al.* 2002). The participation of third states in the EU crisis management operations and missions is important for the EU. As Tardy (2014, 4) points out, there are two main reasons why the EU seeks their participation. The first deals with capacity. Third states provide the EU with access to personnel, assets and expertise that the EU may lack for a particular mission or operation. As the EU has expanded the number of operations and missions it has conducted, this has become even more important. In its review of the draft FPA between the EU and Australia, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office stated that:

> [The] UK supports greater participation of third states in EU crisis management operations as non-EU personnel can bring additional resources and expertise to the table. We believe that facilitating third state participation can help improve the overall impact and effectiveness of the EU operations (FCO 2013, 1).

This report identified that through the provision of additional resources and expertise, third states would contribute to the overall success of EU operations. This has been especially important during a period of shrinking defence budgets and government cuts to their civil service. The defence spending of EU member states has been steadily declining since 1999 to an average of less than 2 percent of their gross domestic product (although 2016 saw a shift upwards). The UK's exit will reduce the defence capabilities available to the EU, as it has one of the largest defence capabilities among the EU member states. In 2016, the UK spent US$52.5 billion on defence, followed by France (US$47.2 billion), Germany (US$38.3 billion) and Italy (US$22.3 billion) (IISS 2017). This will impact on the ability of the EU to launch and sustain credible military operations. Thus, in order to fill capability shortfalls, the EU will have to rely on third states. This will present several challenges for the EU, especially regarding the role of third states in the decision-making processes of CSDP operations.

The second explanation is political. 'The visibility and effectiveness of the EU in crisis management partly relies on its capacity to attract non-EU countries and institutionalise relationships with them' (Tardy 2014, 4). Thus, the signing of FPAs and the involvement of third states in CSDP missions and operations marks an important indicator of how the EU is perceived as an actor within the area of crisis management. Agreeing to participate

in a CSDP mission or operation 'requires a certain degree of acceptance of EU practices as well as a degree of subordination' (ibid.). It demonstrates that states view the EU as an important actor in crisis management, and a willingness to accept the decision-making authority of the EU within these operations. During the early years of the CSDP, the engagement of third states was seen as important for validating and giving support to the EU's role within crisis management (ibid.). This external validation remains important, especially in terms of enhancing the 'credibility and the normative value' of its actions (Törő 2010, 345).

The EU–Australia FPA and Australia's participation in EUCAP Nestor

Australia and the EU opened negotiations on an FPA following the Australia–EU Ministerial Consultations between the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Kevin Rudd, and the then EU High Representative, Catherine Ashton, on 31 October 2011. In announcing this decision, Ashton stated that:

> Recent events in North Africa and the Middle East have underlined the value in Australia and the EU cooperating closely in responding to international crises … The proposed Agreement will facilitate this cooperation, by making it easier for Australia to contribute to EU crisis management operations (Rudd and Ashton 2011).

At the July 2013 Foreign Affairs Council Meeting, the EU agreed to the finalisation of the agreement (Council of the European Union 2013, 29). In April 2015, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, and the EU's High Representative, Federica Mogherini, signed the FPA.

The signing of the FPA signifies the deepening of EU–Australia relations over the years. It reflects the fact that 'Australia and the EU share a strong commitment to international peace and security and a desire to facilitate reconstruction and stabilisation through cooperation and burden sharing in crisis management operations' (DFAT 2015, 3). In signing the agreement, Mogherini and Bishop (2015) reinforced this, stating that the FPA marked 'a concrete expression of our resolve to respond jointly to the resolution of international crises'. The agreement was an acknowledgement that the EU and Australia have been engaged within the same areas (the Middle East, Gulf of Aden and Asia) to address similar security concerns (counter-piracy, capacity-building, rule of law, counter-terrorism). As DFAT acknowledged

> Australia and EU cooperation in responding to international crises, such as our participation in the Libya Contact Group in 2011. Australia and the EU have made concurrent contributions to peacekeeping and peace-building operations in Afghanistan and South Sudan, reflecting the overlapping nature of our international peace and security interests (DFAT 2015, 3).

For example, both Australia and the EU have been involved in providing training, advice and assistance to the Afghan National Police—the EU through EUPOL Afghanistan, and Australia through the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission.

Through Australia's participation in US-led operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, Australia has worked alongside a number of EU member states that were also part of these operations. Australia has also been part of the Combined Maritime Force under US leadership, deployed in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. It has contributed to the UN

Contact Group off the coast of Somalia, participating in legal and operational working groups and the Shared Awareness and Deconfliction group, which assists in coordinating the piracy efforts of the Combined Maritime Force, NATO and the EU. Tackling piracy to preserve free and safe access to this sea route is an area of crucial importance to Australia as it relies heavily on the oil imports that transit through the area. In October 2011, Kevin Rudd and Catherine Ashton co-chaired a forum on piracy. The forum was attended by Indian Ocean Rim countries and stakeholders promoting security in Somalia and off the Horn of Africa. It endorsed international efforts to restore peace and stability in Somalia. Australia hosted a counter-piracy conference in Perth in 2012 as part of its ongoing commitment to international counter-piracy efforts.

Maritime security has become a major aspect of Australia's engagement with the EU, as reflected in 2014 when Australia participated in its first CSDP mission, EUCAP Nestor. EUCAP Nestor was launched in July 2012 as a civilian mission across five states in the Horn of Africa and the western Indian Ocean (Djibouti, Somalia, Seychelles, Kenya and Tanzania).[2] Its aim is to assist these countries to develop self-sustaining capacity for continued enhancement of maritime security, including counter-piracy and maritime governance. It is an unarmed capacity-building mission with no executive powers. Its activities are geared to reinforcing coastguard functions and supporting the rule of law and the judiciary. Since its establishment, EUCAP Nestor has been small in size, with the mission standing at 165, with 125 international and 40 national staff as of August 2017 (EEAS 2017b). The small size of the mission has meant that third states have been invited to provide specific expertise or fill gaps that cannot be filled by EU member states.

Through Australia's involvement in maritime security within the region via its participation in the Combined Maritime Force, Australia was invited to participate in EUCAP Nestor. Australia participated for 12 months (August 2014—August 2015). Its participation consisted of a single legal drafting expert attached to EUCAP Nestor in the Office of the Attorney-General of the Republic of Seychelles. The legal drafting expert advised on maritime and criminal law, which assisted with piracy prosecutions in the Horn of Africa region. According to DFAT (2015, 3), the mission reflected 'Australia's long-standing interest in supporting the development of maritime security in countries of the Indian Ocean region, including in counter-piracy and maritime governance'. EUCAP Nestor provided an avenue through which Australia could contribute to addressing the root causes behind the rise in piracy within the region and assist in facilitating capacity-building for greater regional engagement. The EU's engagement within the region seeks to facilitate capacity-building through developing a comprehensive approach to maritime security by combining counter-piracy operations with programs on the ground aimed at addressing the root causes behind piracy, thus addressing the broader security, political, judicial and economic situations in affected countries (see Bueger 2016; Caramerli and Caselli 2015). This strategy reflects the growing international recognition that naval operations, while having an impact, are limited in what they can do to eradicate piracy in the region (Bienvenue 2010).

EUCAP Nestor marked the first opportunity for Australia to experience working with the EU within the framework of the CSDP on a very small scale (limited in terms of both personnel and duration). As the mission itself was low risk, it allowed Australia to show its willingness to collaborate with the EU without placing Australian personnel in danger. In addition, it exposed Australia to the inner workings of the EU's crisis management mechanisms. Yet, Australia's contribution to EUCAP Nestor would have been negligible to the

overall mission. As Ejdus (2017, 473) argues, one of the critiques of the mission among commentators and officials within the host countries has been that seconded staff have had little time to acclimatise and familiarise themselves with the context and their project before they had to leave (being seconded for between 12 and 18 months). For personnel from third countries, this is further exacerbated as they also have to adjust to the EU's unfamiliar processes.

With the exception of a few missions, such as European Union Force Althea (EUFOR Althea) in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the role of third states has been limited. In part this is due to the relatively small size of most CSDP missions and operations themselves. As Tardy (2014, 4) points out: 'the relatively small size of EU operations leaves little space for a significant third state role without disrupting the overall balance of personnel in the operation'. Australia's contribution to EUCAP Nestor fits in with this trend of allowing the EU to draw on the specific expertise of partners while maintaining an EU focus. It also allows countries like Australia to have the opportunity to establish or maintain a presence within a specific area, work with the EU in dealing with a shared interest, and facilitate socialisation among officials, without having to commit a significant amount of resources (personnel, equipment and money) to do so.

The ability to participate in CSDP missions has not replaced third-state engagement in other institutions involved in 'crisis management' (for example, the UN, NATO or the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe). Rather, third states see their participation in CSDP missions as an additional mechanism for them to increase their international involvement in areas where they have specific security interests. When reviewing the FPA, DFAT made the point that:

> The proposed Agreement would widen the opportunity for Australia to make such contributions—especially for operations in which Australian participation would otherwise be difficult, either because of the absence of alternative multinational operations (such as a UN operation), or because the operations are in regions where the Australian footprint is light (such as Sub-Saharan Africa) (DFAT 2015, 3).

As Pijovic (2016) has illustrated, Africa has not been an important area of strategic importance for Australia. It has meant that Australia has had limited direct engagement in Africa.

Australia continues to work closely with other partners (such as the UN and NATO) on international peace and stability. Australia remains a key partner of NATO, and is one of the leading non-NATO contributors to NATO operations within the Middle East. At a regional level, Australia is actively engaged in facilitating peace and stability within the region through its membership of the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asia Summit, and its bilateral engagement and joint exercises with Asian states in the region. The FPA provides Australia with another avenue through which to pursue its security interests and contribute to international peace and security. It therefore allows Australia to continue to pursue a pragmatic approach to foreign policy with minimal costs.

The future of EU–Australia crisis management collaboration

So, what does the FPA mean for Australia and its potential engagement in further CSDP missions? The EU currently has 16 missions in operation (6 military and 10 civilian). They

vary in terms of their mandate, size and duration. According to Minard (2015, 2), Australia's interests and activities in preserving free and safe passage along vital sea routes 'would seem to be the area where Europeans could benefit the most from the partnership'. Thus, Australia's involvement with international and regional efforts to counter piracy could open the way for Australia to play some role in the EU's naval force operation off the coast of Somalia (EU NAVFOR Somalia) or with those missions within Africa aimed at dealing with the root causes of piracy within the region by building military, police and judiciary capacity—EUCAP Sahel (Mali), EUCAP (Niger), European Union Training Mission (EUTM) Somalia and EUTM Mali. The challenge for the EU and Australia, however, is to identify where Australia can make the most of its contributions, especially as both the EU and Australia have their attention focused on other issues and hot spots. It will be important for Australia to identify where and how it can contribute to CSDP operations and communicate its preferences to the EU. This will demonstrate to the EU Australia's commitment to collaborate in this area.

Within the Asia-Pacific, the EU has made it clear that it wishes to work with its Asian partners in dealing with security issues, specifically within the area of training and monitoring. Such activities could open the door for greater cooperation between the EU and Australia within the region. The EU and Australia have a history of discussing 'common approaches to developments in the Asia-Pacific region, including security in East Asia' (Mogherini and Bishop 2015), which continues through their ministerial meetings and participation in such regional bodies as the ASEAN Regional Forum and Asia–Europe Meeting. The Framework Agreement has identified capacity-building as an area where Australia and the EU can better collaborate. In November 2017, Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, called on the EU to be more engaged in the region (EEAS 2017a), especially in protecting rules-based international order. The Australian government (2017, 80) has reiterated in the *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* that it regards the EU as an important partner in its efforts to protect and promote rules-based international order.

Since the EU launched the CSDP Aceh monitoring mission in 2005–6, the EU has not deployed further CSDP missions within the region. Although the EU's (2016, 38) 'Global Strategy' made no specific reference to the CSDP's deployment within the region, it did mention the EU developing 'a more politically rounded approach to Asia, seeking to make greater practical contributions to Asian security'. An EU official also confirmed that the EU is eager to engage in the region and build on the success of the CSDP Aceh mission (interview with EU official, Brussels, December 2017). The form that this practical contribution to Asian security will take is yet to be determined, but it could build on the EU's mediating role in Mindanao. The ongoing instability within the EU's immediate region, the ramifications from the UK's Brexit referendum in June 2016, and the uncertainty surrounding the role that the Trump administration will play within Europe and the Asia-Pacific will all have a bearing on the EU's engagement in the region. If this engagement were to entail a CSDP mission, it would, based on the pronouncements by the EU and Australia, be an ideal opportunity for the EU to invite Australia to participate.

Conclusion

This article has argued that the FPA marks a further manifestation of how the EU–Australia relationship has both broadened to encompass more than just economics and

deepened through the formalisation of bilateral engagement through numerous agreements. Since the mid to late 1990s, the EU and Australia have deepened their engagement to incorporate a multitude of areas, of which security has become a policy area where we have seen an increased awareness of shared interest in facilitating international peace and security. The FPA allows this awareness to have a practical application. The challenge for both Australia and the EU is to ensure that the FPA does not remain a paper commitment with little substance. At a time when the EU is faced with serious internal crises (the eurozone debt crisis, Brexit, the refugee crisis and internal disunity), and the EU and Australia are each trying to adapt to the shifting global dynamics, it could be tempting for Australia and the EU to shelve the FPA as not being of strategic importance. However, the agreement provides an important mechanism through which the EU and Australian can work together, along with other partners, to tackle growing regional and global instability and conflict. The fact that CSDP missions and operations can range in scope from peacekeeping to monitoring and mentoring operations provides significant scope for the EU and Australia to work together, especially within the Asia-Pacific. With the support of Asian interlocutors such as ASEAN, there is scope for the EU to launch capacity-building missions which Australia can actively contribute to.

Notes

1. For example, Australia contributed to United Nations peacekeeping operations in East Timor, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia and Eritrea.
2. Following a strategic review of EUCAP Nestor at the end of 2015, the mission shifted its focus solely on Somalia (including Somaliland). The mission was renamed EUCAP Somalia in March 2017.

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