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The EU's Security Sector Reform Policies
in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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Abstract: In this article we approach the functioning of bureaucracy in European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) from a governance perspective that also focuses on informal patterns of interaction between the relevant bureaucratic actors. Following the governance and related network governance approaches, the interplay between formal and informal patterns of interaction can help to overcome deadlock in policy-making and to procure effective problem-solving. This perspective is applied to security sector reform (SSR) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). SSR is one of the major emerging fields of activity within the civilian crisis management dimension of ESDP, that also in the DRC became a focal point in the EU's new security and defence policy since its inception. However, as the EU involvement in the Congolese security sector reform policies illustrates, coordination and negotiation among European actors to overcome deadlock and produce effective problem-solving is not self-evident or even desirable for all actors. In the case of the EU's SSR policies in Congo, coordination indeed occurs between the actors that are dependent upon each other in terms of resources and have the willingness to jointly tackle the problems related to the SSR in the DRC. However, it is also often undermined by actors that prefer to engage

bilaterally because they possess the resources to do so and the personal relationships with the Congolese authorities to act more efficiently and effectively.

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1. Introduction

The main argument of this special issue is that, in order to understand the decision-making, implementation and functioning of ESDP, we need to gain a better insight into the role of bureaucracy in the preparation and implementation of the EU security and defence policy processes. In this article we argue that, in order to understand the functioning of bureaucracy and the increasing number of bureaucratic actors involved in ESDP, we also need to gain a better insight into the informal patterns of interaction between the often limited number of *relevant* bureaucratic actors that de facto run ESDP operations. We argue that ESDP and the role of non-elected actors in ESDP is best understood if the EU's security and defence policy is seen from a governance perspective, which reveals complex processes of governing that involve multiple actors in the absence of a central authority (Eising and Kohler-Koch 1999, 4; Peters and Pierre 2009, 92). A governance perspective focuses on less hierarchical relationships between multiple actors operating in multiple arenas; on how interests, goals and actions are coordinated; on how to overcome the deadlock of rigid decision-making regimes; and on the particular policy outcomes in which these interactions result.

In this research, we therefore turn to a rather underexplored approach in the field of EU foreign policy – the governance and network governance approach – in order to gain an insight into the underlying dynamics and mechanisms of ESDP and explain *how* and *why* there is a certain policy outcome towards the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In line with the dual ambition of this special issue, this article aims to enhance the academic debate in two ways. Firstly, it aims to advance the theoretical debate about the role of non-elected actors in ESDP by applying the governance and network governance literature to ESDP – thereby complementing the contribution of Mérand, Hofmann and Irondelle (2010) in this special issue. Secondly, this article aspires to contribute to the empirically informed academic literature on ESDP administrative governance by examining the EU role as a crisis manager in one specific case: security sector reform (SSR) and, more specifically, police reform in DRC studies.

Both the issue area (security sector reform) and the third country (DRC) that have been selected for this case-study have a wider relevance for the study of ESDP. Security sector reform is one of the major emerging fields of activity within the civilian crisis management dimension of ESDP, with operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, fYROM, Kosovo, Moldova, Georgia, the DRC, Guinea-Bissau, the Palestinian Territories, Iraq, Indonesia and Afghanistan (Council of the EU 2009). Although these missions are not always formally labelled as SSR as such, most civilian crisis management operations of ESDP are situated in the domain of the security sector, encompassing support to the military structures, police and judicial sector (for an overview see Nowak 2006; Spence and Fluri 2008). The analysis presented in this article therefore has a wider relevance for a broader number of ESDP/CSDP missions. Moreover, these operations are mostly deployed in countries or regions with similar post-conflict characteristics and problems.

Security sector reform is a broad concept that goes beyond traditional military actors and activities. As a multidimensional policy, it involves various actors, including civil society and other non-state actors, at multiple levels of government, for its formulation and implementation, and is at the same time directed to various actors involved in security in the country at stake. Given this complexity, the SSR process (from formulation to implementation and beyond) can thus theoretically best be understood from a governance perspective. It relates to "all state institutions and other entities with a role in ensuring the security of the state and its people" (European Commission 2006a, 5). In this sense, all ESDP missions that aim at supporting security institutions and structures in their development and reform can be classified as security sector reform missions. Under security institutions we understand military structures, police structures, judicial and rule of law institutions, border protection structures, etc. What does not fall under the SSR definition is the direct involvement or participation of European soldiers in conflict, which the EU did for instance in its operations Concordia (fYROM), Artemis (DRC) and EUFOR Tchad/RCA (Chad).

The study of ESDP operations in DRC is relevant as it is the country outside the European continent that gained most attention from the EU's new security and defence policy since the

ESDP's inception. Moreover, using ESDP operations in a non-European country as a case study also has the advantage of excluding considerations and factors related to potential EU membership. Security sector reform is one of the most important challenges for the Congolese authorities and the international community, reflecting problems, challenges and dilemmas the international and national authorities are also confronted with in other parts of the world (see Dobbins *et al*. 2008; Spence and Fluri 2008). The analysis of the SSR in the DRC can therefore also contribute to a better understanding of SSR in other third countries.

The next section of this article links to the governance and the network governance literature and pays particular attention to the foreign, security and defence policy within this literature. The third section points to the main features of the governance approach and analyses what this means within the context of ESDP. The last section applies this conceptual framework to the specific case of security sector reform in the DRC. The analysis in this article is based on multiple sources: official documents and academic literature; interviews with civil servants and diplomats of the Council, the Commission, EU member states and the DRC; and on a study visit of one of the authors to the DRC in September 2009. The interviews were conducted in Brussels in the period from April to August 2009 and in December 2009, and in Kinshasa between 8 and 28 September 2009[1].

2. Governance in the European Union

Conceptualizations of governance have mushroomed in the research and literature on European Union policy-making and politics (see for instance Kohler-Koch and Eising 1999, Kohler-Koch 2003 and 2008, Hooghe and Marks 2001, Christiansen and Piattoni 2003, Verdun and Croci 2005, Bache and Flinders 2005, Tömmel and Verdun 2009, Peters and Pierre 2009). Peters and Pierre (2009, 92) define governance as "an extremely complex process involving multiple actors pursuing a wide range of individual and organizational goals, as well as pursuing the collective goals of the society". For Tömmel and Verdun, European governance is characterized by "the highly diversified EU procedures and practices, combining formalized modes of rule-setting with informal practices of negotiation, cooperation and consensus-building; the multilevel and multi-actor structure underlying these procedures and practices, and, not the least, the diverging patterns of implementation under a common umbrella" (2009, 1).

A specific mode of governance has been conceptualized as network governance. Networks reflect "structural relationships, interdependencies and dynamics between actors in politics and policy-making" (Börzel 1998, 258-259). As noted by Börzel "networks can provide additional, informal linkage between the inter- and intra-organizational decision-making arenas. Such informal linkages, based on communication and trust, overlap with institutionalized structures of co-ordination and link different organizations independently from the formal relationships between them". Moreover, as networks provide redundant

possibilities for interaction and communication, they can be used to solve decision-making problems and overcome the structural dilemma of bargaining systems (Börzel 1998, 262). Networks can take very different forms, depending on variables such as membership, frequency of interaction, continuity, level of integration, distribution of resources (Rhodes and Marsh 1992a, 1992b). Central to network governance is the efficient and effective problem-solving orientation of particular actors in a fragmented but highly interwoven policy environment. The functionality of network governance relies on its capacity to manage differentiation, to upgrade common interests in the process of negotiation and, in the end, to increase the ability to act (Kohler-Koch 1999, 25-26). An important factor in explaining the effectiveness of networks is that, while individual network participants are agents of organization, inter-organizational relations are also strengthened by interpersonal links (Marsh and Rhodes 1992b, 261-262).

Research on governance and network governance in the EU is mainly focused on the internal EU policy domains and first pillar cases in which the 'community method' prevails (Peterson 2004, Skogstad 2003, Falkner 2000). However, as is also noted by Kohler-Koch and Rittberger (2006, 32), 'governance' and 'foreign, security and defence policy' is a combination that has hardly been studied. EU foreign policy, including the CFSP and ESDP, is mostly seen as a 'high politics' domain in which member states are the key players and policies are the result of a predominantly intergovernmental process. Only a limited number of publications analyse network governance in the EU's external, foreign and security policy (Pfetsch 1998, Collinson 1999, Filtenborg, Gänzle and Johansson 2002, Krahmann 2003, Knodt 2004, Elgström and Jönsson 2005, Jönsson and Strömvik 2005, Kohler-Koch 2005). However, in most of these cases the term 'governance' is used without these authors applying the conceptualisations of the governance or network governance literature on foreign policy (see Keukeleire and Justaert 2010).

This theoretical literature is less often applied to the specific field of ESDP. In this article we therefore intent to elaborate this underexplored field of research. The next section analyses some of the main features of the governance approach within the context of ESDP: the involvement of multiple relevant actors, the importance of resource dependencies between these actors, and multiple patterns of interaction which are focussed on overcoming deadlock and on effective problem-solving.

3. Governance in ESDP

3.1. Multiple actors in a multilevel, multi-pillar and multi-location governance system

Governance reflects a more cooperative and coordinative way of 'managing' among a variety of actors, rather than authoritative 'governing' and hierarchical intervention. In addition to attention for formal rules and procedures, governance concentrates on various forms and

settings for coordination and cooperation among *multiple actors* as a mode of joint policy-making for collective problems (Kohler-Koch and Rittberger 2006, 39).

Applied to ESDP, this implies that it is not sufficient to focus on the bureaucratic structures and procedures that have been established in Brussels in order to 'govern' the EU's new security and defence policy. As other articles in this special issue emphasise, the High Representative and the Special Representatives, the Council Secretariat-General, the Political and Security Committee, the specialized Working Groups and the various other new bureaucratic structures within the orbit of the Council are surely important in terms of policy preparation, decision-making, implementation as well as in terms of socialisation of the new member states (see also Duke and Vanhoonacker 2006; Juncos and Pomorska 2008). However, they cannot on their own account for the output and outcome of the EU's security and defence policy. Adopting a governance approach helps us to see that a wider set of actors have to be taken into account, including multiple actors that are not always part of or that are not always that visible within the main bureaucratic structures that have been established to govern ESDP. Which are these relevant actors within the European administrative governance system in the field of crisis management?

Firstly, both the number and the nature of national actors that are involved in ESDP is seriously broadened beyond the group of diplomats that is traditionally linked to the EU's foreign and security policy or that traditionally populates the Council structures. At the national level, the military crisis management conducted within the framework of the ESDP implies the involvement of the Ministries of Defence and of the various military structures of the member states. On the EU level, this has been translated in well-organized military structures, including the EU Military Committee, the EU Military Staff, the Political-Military Group, etc. More complex and diffuse are the actors involved in civilian crisis management. These include actors from the national Ministries of Interior Affairs, of Justice, of Finance, of Development Cooperation as well as from the operational police, judicial, and customs structures and specialized agencies of the member states – each with their own procedures, approaches and cultures. From each of these national bureaucracies, civilian crisis management requires bureaucrats from the capitals to prepare, implement and assure the follow-up of decision-making (both in their own country and in the EU's bureaucratic structures in Brussels) as well as people from the various national operational structures who are able to prepare and particularly implement and assure the follow-up of policies in the field. The latter refers to qualified police officers, judges, and other civilian specialists who are leaving the national and Brussels arena to conduct the civilian crisis management operations in the specific context of the Balkans, Africa, Middle East, etc. This points to the major challenges in terms of coordination of this multiplicity of actors of both the national and EU authorities operating in the member states' capitals, the EU institutions and specifically in the domain of foreign policy the actors operating in the representations and delegations in third countries. However, paradoxically, the civilian bureaucratic structures developed within the framework of ESDP are much less developed than the military

structures – leading to a higher need for complementary or alternative coordination mechanisms in the EU (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008, 181-185; Quille *et al*. 2006).

Secondly, EU member states are not only active through the EU's political and bureaucratic structures but also through direct bilateral relations with third countries. This implies that in the individual member states the various national bureaucratic actors mentioned above can also be involved in crisis management initiatives in third countries independent from the EU framework. And to make things even more complicated: the national actors involved in the multilateral deliberations on security sector initiatives in the ESDP setting in Brussels and in the implementation of these ESDP policies abroad can be different from the national actors that are involved in the bilateral initiatives of that member state. The case of the UK can help to illustrate this, with this example also being relevant for our case-study on SSR in the DRC. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is the central actor in ESDP meetings on civilian crisis management operations and in organising the British contribution to the implementation of these policies. However, in the UK's bilateral policy towards particularly developing countries – including with regard to SSR – the central national actor is the Department for International Development (DFID), which falls under the responsibility of the Secretary of State for International Development and which manages Britain's aid to poor countries (UK, DFID 2009). In pursuing its goals, the DFID works with governments of developing countries, charities, businesses and international bodies, including the World Bank, the UN agencies and the European Commission – which also points to the need of coordination and attuning policies. The importance of DFID becomes clear when considering that it works in 150 countries, has 2,600 staff (half of whom work abroad) and 64 offices overseas. And this has to be seen within the very extensive diplomatic network of the UK that, just as France and Germany (and the Commission) has more than 110 embassies or external delegations in non-EU countries. This is quite a contrast with the majority of the EU member states that have less than 60 embassies and have a much more limited budget, staff and expertise at their disposal (see table 5.2 in Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008, 134). The latter also points to another factor that is crucial for understanding the bureaucratic governance in the field of crisis management: the considerable differences between the member states in terms of capabilities and resources.

Thirdly, in the case of civilian crisis management, first pillar actors and the European Commission in particular are more involved than one would expect from a purely institutional or legal point of view. Politically and financially, through its executive function within the first pillar and through its control of the EU budget, the European Commission can rely on a quite extensive and stable arsenal of instruments. One the one hand, there are the various agreements and partnerships with other countries and regions in the world and the related respective financial instruments, such as the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and the European Development Fund (EDF). These increasingly also touch upon areas such as good governance, rule of law, capacity building and policy reforms in the field of security and justice, which provides a basis for the Community and the Commission in particular to be directly or indirectly

involved in matters that touch upon SSR (see, for instance, art. 33 of the Cotonou Agreement, EU-ACP 2005). On the other hand, a number of more specific policy instruments, such as the Instrument for Stability (IFS) and the African Peace Facility (APF), allow the Commission to support a range of both military and civilian crisis management activities, including in the field of security sectors (Keukeleire and MacNaugthan 2008, 116-119, 219-223; Buxton 2008, 27-37). Within the Commission multiple DG's are involved, each with their own agenda, own approaches, and own procedural and legal frameworks – which leads to turf battles as well as the need for coordination both within the Commission and between these DG's and other actors. DG RELEX is involved in conflict prevention and stability programmes in third countries and has been equipped with a Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management Unit. DG Development, which also manages the EDF, is politically and financially the most important actor when it comes to the relations with the ACP group of countries (including countries in which ESDP operations have been deployed, such as the DR Congo). The Commission can also rely on an extensive diplomatic network with over 120 delegations in third countries, which explains why the Commission is not only a potentially relevant actor in the decision-making process in Brussels but also in the preparatory and operational implementation stage in the field.

A fourth set of crucial actors in the ESDP's wider governance system are the multiple other international organisations and forums, such as the UN, NATO, the OSCE, the World Bank, IMF, and the many (sub)regional institutions. Most security challenges are indeed tackled by a wider set of international organizations, which is logical in view of the multifaceted nature of most foreign policy challenges, the different mandates and resources of the various international organizations, and – important – the different organizational preferences of the member states. This is what we refer to as 'multi-location' foreign policy (Wallace 2005, 78; Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008, 31-32). The result is that nearly all foreign policy actions undertaken by the EU, including SSR activities, are developed in parallel to the actions of other international organizations or are elaborated on the initiative or within the framework of other organisations such as the UN or the African Union. This multi-location nature of foreign policy-making explains the strong need to coordinate policy with other international organizations and other relevant third countries – both on the general level (objectives and strategies) and the level of the nitty-gritty of implementing specific policy initiatives in the field. However, since the EU as a whole is not formally a member of these organisations, it often depends on the Presidency of the Council or on the represented EU member states to bridge activities of multiple international organisations (Wouters *et al.* 2006; Smith and Laatikainen 2006).

Fifth, besides international organisations, also individual third countries are involved in specific security dossiers. In the main foreign policy dossiers – such as Afghanistan, the Balkans and the Middle East – the US, Russia and other big players are involved. Yet, in specific security dossiers – such as SSR in the DRC, Guinea-Bissau, etc. – also regional powers and small or medium-sized states can be important actors (such as South-Africa, Angola and Norway). For the development and implementation of the EU's SSR policies, this

implies that also relations with these players are important. The EU has developed an extensive and regular dialogue with other major partners. However, this dialogue is often mainly focused on bilateral relations and on the main issues on the international agenda, and less on specific foreign policy issues such as civilian crisis management or SSR in third countries. This also explains why coordination often depends on the mutual relations and initiatives of the diplomats and civil servants in the field (this means in the third country where, for example, SSR programmes are implemented).

Sixth, in many sectors of civilian crisis management (including SSR), know-how is provided to governments and institutions by various non-governmental actors: NGOs, research centres and think tanks, private consultancies, and multinational corporations that dispose of technical expertise and manpower. Not only international actors, such as the European Commission, but also individual states rely on NGOs and consultancies to implement, for instance, SSR policies in third countries. As the case-study on the DRC shows, the UK's Department for International Development contracted several private consultancy organisations (such as PricewaterhouseCoopers), to implement the SSR projects. It is obvious that the involvement of this kind of actors poses specific challenges with regard to coordination. Particularly specialized business actors, such as consultancies, are in general much less visible to the outside world and often have other more business oriented approaches than many of the other relevant actors.

Last but not least, the most crucial actor for the development and implementation of crisis management policies and for effective international coordination is the target country itself. This actor, however, is often disregarded in the policy process, not only in Brussels but also in deliberations in the UN and other forums of security policy-making. It is the target country that in principle should take the lead and needs to monitor and steer foreign interventions from other countries, on the basis of national strategies, priorities and action plans. However, these countries often do neither have the tradition nor the capacities (in terms of staff, financial resources, logistics and expertise) to assume this role. They also often do not feel sufficiently strong vis-à-vis the external actors to uphold the principle of ownership. Moreover, also the target countries are in fact fragmented, with multiple actors, ministries and security actors being involved in the adoption and reception (or rejection) of SSR policies. It is clear that this again poses multiple challenges in terms of internal and external coordination.

3.2. Resource dependencies, overcoming deadlock and effective problem-solving

The previous overview of multiple actors in a multilevel, multi-pillar and multi-location governance system shows clearly that the development and implementation of security and defence policies, such as SSR programmes, is more complex than one would assume from a purely formal institutional point of view and that this goes beyond the formal ESDP actors and structures. Various factors determine the extent to which the formal institutional frameworks are complemented by governance systems which also include informal practices

of negotiations, cooperation and coordination. These factors include resource dependency and power, the need to overcome deadlock or other obstacles in the formal institutional settings, and the need to coordinate to achieve effective problem-solving – dimensions which are further elaborated in this section.

Both the complexity and interconnectedness of policy issues and the dispersion of problem-solving capabilities bring together the multiple actors operating at multiple levels and locations. Complexity and interconnectedness are two central themes in the governance approach (Rhodes 1999). Solutions for policy problems, especially in the domain of security and defence cannot be found within the boundaries of a single political location. Not only between the EU and its member states, but also beyond EU levels of governance, resource interdependencies exist and require coordination and mediation between diverging interests, objectives, strategies, and pooling capabilities. Central to the notion of interdependency is the concept of power. Power determines to a large extent the position an actor occupies or takes in its relations and interactions with other actors. It refers to the possession of policy-specific resources and the degree of dependency among actors. As power is defined in terms of "policy-specific capacity to act" (Kohler-Koch 1999, 31), it is clear that the distribution of resources and, consequently, the potential relevance of the actors will be different for each foreign policy dossier. More concretely: the availability and distribution of problem-solving capacities will be different for SSR in Kosovo than for reform in DRCongo or Aceh/Indonesia, just as also the needs and ambitions with regard to SSR in these three countries will vary substantially. Power should also be understood in terms of institutional and personal relationships of the external actors with the relevant local actors. The capacity to act and to implement effectively problem-solving policies is to a large extent dependent on the reception, involvement and acceptance of the target country itself. Our case-study on the DRC demonstrates that significant differences can exist among European actors in the nature and depth of the relations with the local authorities, which has an impact on the relations between the various European actors, on their power relations and on the degree of mutual dependency.

Within the context of the EU, it is clear that in many cases of crisis management and SSR, only a limited number of actors can be considered as relevant. It is obvious that the largest member states, particularly France, the UK and Germany, not only have more interests in problem-solving in a larger number of third countries and foreign policy issues, but can also rely on a much wider arsenal of problem-solving capabilities and a more developed bureaucratic and diplomatic framework to elaborate and implement policies (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan 2008, 124-141). However, this picture has to be nuanced, as this does not mean that governance systems developed in the context of EU's external policies will only consist of the largest members or that the largest member states will always be involved. As power is defined in terms of "policy-specific capacity to act", networks can also include small or medium-sized member states which can possess the required policy-specific problem-solving capabilities. These countries can prove to be relevant players in specific third countries as a result of historical links, privileged political or economic contacts, or because this third

country has been chosen as one of the main partner countries in, for instance, this member states' development budget (Keukeleire 2006). In short, the question is not whether a country is small or large, but whether a country is relevant for a specific foreign policy matter and can provide an added-value in terms of mobilizing relevant problem-solving resources.

The degree of dependency among actors on the resources of other actors is, in addition to the availability of policy-specific resources, a second major factor that determines the power of actors and the constitution of governance systems or network governance. Resource dependency between relevant actors and the mobilization of resources necessary to tackle specific policy issues are indeed core elements of governance (Börzel 1998, 263). However, as Sørensen and Torfing emphasise, "there might be an asymmetrical allocation of material and immaterial resources amongst the actors, meaning that some are stronger and more central than others". Moreover, "since participation is voluntary and exit always remains a possibility, and since the actors are depending on each other in order 'to get things done', nobody can command or force anybody else in the manner possible within a system of hierarchical rule" (2005, 203). This is an important though often neglected observation: effective governance systems will indeed only emerge when also the most powerful actors – in terms of possessing problem-solving capacities – will experience the same resource dependency and will thus consider governance systems as useful or unavoidable. Our case-study on SSR in DRCongo will demonstrate that this is not always the case, with the stronger problem-solving capabilities of some countries undermining the governance systems that other actors consider as essential.

Another dimension that contributes to the creation of governance systems is the extent to which the various relevant actors see the need to overcome obstacles within complex institutional settings and even deadlock in formal policy-making. This depends on whether actors consider that they have to resort to what Héritier (1997, 172) labels as "subterfuge": the creative use of informal strategies to avoid deadlock in formal policy-making. Through its focus on less hierarchical and informal practices of policy-making in addition to formal regimes, and on mediation, coordination and cooperation among a variable number of actors, governance indeed entails the potential to overcome deadlock in complex formal institutional settings and to contribute to effective problem-solving. Analysing the institutional setup of the ESDP makes clear that this is even more complex and contains even more potential obstacles and risks of deadlock than is the case in internal EU policy domains, where competences are more clear defined and delimited. This is the result of the multi-actor and multilevel character of ESDP and particularly of the purely intergovernmental character of the ESDP framework, with unanimity being required in the multiplicity of bodies, committees and substructures (see Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra and Maurer 2010). Moreover, as has been argued above, crisis management and security sector policies in particular do not exclusively emanate from the traditional CFSP/ESDP actors, but also need the involvement of a variety of other actors: from within the member states, from the Commission, other international organisations and non-governmental organisations. As important differences exist among these actors in terms

of interests, priorities, agendas, approaches, there is a pressing need for mediation and coordination between all these actors.

The overview of actors in the previous section indeed indicated that there are multiple challenges in terms of coordination, mediation and possibly also pooling of resources. This was also recognized in the EU's *European Security Strategy* of 2003 which pointed to the challenge "to bring together the different instruments and capabilities: European assistance programmes and the European Development Fund, military and civilian capabilities from Member States and other instruments". It also emphasised that all efforts "should follow the same agenda" and that "[i]n a crisis there is no substitute for unity of command" (European Council 2003, 13). However the reality is that, in practice, there is not only no unity of command but, even more problematic, even no formalized structures to bring together and try to coordinate and mediate in function of effective problem-solving – which also points to the importance of fully using the integrative potential of the new institutional provisions of the Lisbon Treaty (Justaert and Nasra 2008, Whitman and Juncos 2009). The same is true on a broader international level: although some new mechanisms have been developed for structured coordination between for instance the EU and the UN, no effective institutionalized settings exist that bring together all relevant actors from the EU, from other international organisations and countries, and/or from non-governmental actors.

The limitations or outright absence of formal inter-organizational co-ordination mechanisms leads to the context in which governance systems can emerge as an adequate setting for coordination, mediation and pooling of resources. It is in these contexts that formalized modes of policy-making can be complemented or substituted by informal practices of negotiation, cooperation and consensus-building. This already indicates that governance systems can be quite diffuse: it can lead to a situation in which multiple (parallel, competing or complementary) governance systems can emerge or can be promoted by specific actors – depending on the nature of the relationship and mutual dependency of the various relevant actors. It is clear that such a situation with multiple overlapping interactions and negotiation systems (Börzel 2007, 3-4) does not necessarily lead to an increase in the problem-solving capabilities of the international community – despite the fact that governance systems precisely emerge to increase the chance of effective policy-making and problem-solving.

In the following section we will assess the relevance and assumptions of informal governance for the implementation of the European security sector policies in the DR Congo. Analogue to the theoretical elaboration, we subsequently deal with the multitude of actors involved, their interdependent relations and the way in which deadlock in the implementation and effectiveness of policies is tackled.

4. EU's Security Sector Reform Policies in the DRC

4.1. EU involvement in Congolese SSR

For the Congolese government, the states of the Great Lakes Region and the members of the international donor community, security in the DRC remains the most important challenge for the development of the country. Its process of SSR, which has started with the transition in 2003, is an all encompassing and interconnected process. In addition to conventional security actors (army, police and intelligence), these include, in the broad definition, "all those organizations considered with the provision of security, such are judiciary, private security guards and paramilitary forces" (Radoman 2008, 5). SSR activities concentrate on three priorities in the DRC: (1) defence, i.e. demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants into the society and the security sector, and the reform of rebel and paramilitary groups into conventional army brigades and security forces, (2) the police, and (3) the law and judicial system. To be effective and sustainable, SSR also includes the reform of the management and oversight bodies of this sector, and is thus also related to principles of 'good governance' and 'democracy promotion' (Keane 2008, 220-224).

Although the Union is a relatively new player in international security and defence, it has in only six years (2003-2009) undertaken a substantial number of operations in various parts in the world (see the introductory article of Vanhoonacker, Dijkstra and Maurer 2010). In the DRC, five operations have been deployed since 2003, two military operations (Artemis and EUFOR Kinshasa) and three civilian (EUPOL Kinshasa, EUSEC DRC and EUPOL DRC). Both EUSEC DRC and EUPOL DRC are still ongoing. Following the elaborated definition on SSR, it is clear that EUSEC RDC, EUPOL Kinshasa and EUPOL RDC are missions in the field of security sector reform. Operation Artemis and EUFOR RDC were two missions that, on request of the UN, intervened directly in the security situation of the DRC, and will therefore not be classified as SSR operations (see also Ulriksen, Gourlay and Mace 2004; Duke 2009).

Table 1 – ESDP operations in the DR Congo

Operation Artemis (DR Congo, 2003)	Military autonomous (EU Operational HQ in France)	1,700 forces
EUPOL KINSHASA (DR Congo, 2005-2007)	SSR / Police	Approx 30 staff
EUFOR RD CONGO (DR Congo, 2006)	Military autonomous (EU Operational HQ in Germany)	Over 1,000 forces; a rapid force available
EUSEC RD CONGO (DRC, 2005-2009)	SSR / Army	60 staff
EUPOL RD Congo (DR Congo, 2007-2010)	SSR / Police	53 international and 9 local staff

Source: Council 2009

In 2005 the EU launched a first civilian ESDP mission that focused on SSR in the DRC: EUPOL Kinshasa. This was a civilian mission in support of the Congolese security sector reform, which was one of the key pillars during the Congolese transition process, and is still the most pressing challenge for the country's stability. EUPOL Kinshasa was launched to monitor, mentor and advise the integrated police units (IPU) until the national elections. The mission ended in 2007, and was succeeded by EUPOL RDC in the same year. The mandate of EUPOL RDC is larger than the mandate of its predecessor and is foreseen to end in 2010. While EUPOL Kinshasa concentrated on the creation of the IPU in Kinshasa as foreseen in the Global and Inclusive Agreement (signed in 2002 by the conflicting parties under pressure of the international community, Inter-Congolese Dialogue 2002), EUPOL RDC supports the entire Congolese National Police and its reform process in terms of concepts and training. The European Commission funded an important part of these civilian ESDP missions, and among the EU member states, especially the UK, France and Belgium have played – and still play – a key role in these missions and the reform of the Congolese police sector in general, both in financial and operational terms (Martinelli 2006; Cosidó Gutiérrez 2006).

In 2005, the Union also deployed another SSR operation, the EUSEC RDC mission, which is a civilian advisory and assistance mission for security reform that concentrates on the reform

and stability of the national Congolese army (FARDC – Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo). The mission was launched after an official request from the Congolese transitional government. Especially Belgium, the former colonial ruler, actively engaged in the Congolese army integration and has undertaken, even before the launch of the operation EUSEC RDC, several missions on its own initiative to train integrated brigades for the Congolese Army (International Crisis Group 2006, 19).

The UN Secretary-General in December 2008 again requested the EU to send a bridging force to the DRC awaiting the enforcement of MONUC. However, the EU this time failed to agree on the bridging mission and did not take on its international responsibilities in a transition process in which it has been deeply involved since the start and in which it has attempted to manifest itself as a credible security and defence actor. This non-action can be attributed to the facts that on the one hand the member states held different perceptions on the necessity of another mission to the country, and the lack of military capabilities on the other hand. The countries that were in favour of a bridging force, such as Belgium, were not able to account for the necessary military capabilities themselves, and those member states that opposed the mission, such as France and the UK were not willing to deploy their capabilities given the fact that they are more intensively involved in other military operations (such as the UK in Iraq and Afghanistan).

The relative rapid succession of ESDP operations in the DRC – and of UN requests for EU support – followed from the expectations that were raised about the EU as a relevant security actor in the DRC. These expectations were raised after the creation of the ESDP and its successful deployment of Artemis (in terms of the rapid decision and pooling of resources) and after EU (EC and the member states) had proved to be one of the leading donors in the world towards the DRC in support of political, humanitarian and security reforms (European Commission 2008b). The rapid succession of ESDP operations in the DRC were also the result of both the interconnectedness of problems and challenges in the Congolese transition and the synchronic processes at multiple levels of governance. Each political decision to launch an ESDP operation in the DRC was indeed only one (though important) part of a larger set of political and operational decisions. For example, the policy-making process with regard to the EU support for the Congolese IPU Kinshasa was *de facto* a succession of policy-making processes on both the EU and national levels (in addition to the UN level and DRC level): first on whether to react positively to the UN's demand to support this IPU, then on what kind of support would be granted, on releasing funds from the European Development Fund, on releasing funds from the CFSP budget, on releasing national financial resources and support in kind (by national authorities), then on sending a fact-mission to evaluate the progress, next on launching the ESDP operation EUPOL Kinshasa, etc. Moreover, these subsequent steps in the policy-making process on IPU Kinshasa simultaneously also influenced the agenda-setting, policy proposals and actual formal decisions with regard to the EU's support and engagement in other areas of the Congolese security sector reform, which is also the result of a circular process of interconnected policy initiatives.

4.2. Multiple actors in a multilevel, multi-pillar and multi-location governance system

The previous overview clearly demonstrated that the ESDP initiatives towards the DRC are linked to and embedded in a broader arena of foreign policy-making that simultaneously takes place at multiple levels and multiple locations. The EU is only one actor to develop security and defence policies towards the DRC, in addition to the bilateral initiatives of its member states, and initiatives of other international organisations, especially the UN. Moreover, at the EU level, the various pillars and institutional actors as well as all member states are involved in these security-related policies. Both the Council and the Commission have developed activities and have spent an important amount of money in the reform of the security sector in the DRC. As the EU support to Congolese SSR demonstrates, the delineation of ESDP / EC security issues and competences is often not at all clear. The police mission EUPOL Kinshasa – that had to monitor and give advice to the Congolese IPU – is a civilian ESDP operation, but the preceding training of the IPU has been done under the Commission's umbrella through a budget line of the European Development Fund (EDF). Through the European Development Fund, the EC / Commission also contributes to other police and judicial sector reform initiatives by providing equipment, infrastructure and technical support (European Commission 2008; Davis 2009b). In these processes from both the Council and the Commission, several member states are involved. The provision of equipment for the IPU in Kinshasa (uniforms, anti-riot equipment, small weapons), for example, was assured by Germany, Hungary and Belgium, with in the latter four Ministries being involved: Foreign Affairs, Defence, Home Affairs, Budget – with traditional tug-of-war that goes hand in hand when several governmental actors are involved (interview in Brussels 01.12.2009).

The Community initiatives support or complement the Council's ESDP missions, such as the support to EUPOL Kinshasa and EUPOL RDC. However, an ESDP mission such as EUPOL RDC has a clearly defined mandate, a limited scope (in terms of equipment and manpower) and operates in a relatively short period of time. The Commission on the other hand, is a more permanent actor with a more extensive network of permanent relations and a larger scope of competences (interview in Brussels 22.12.2009). Not surprisingly, this leads to inarticulate tensions between the Commission delegation and the Council's police missions. In Kinshasa, the mandate and role of EUPOL RDC focussed in the first place on the support to the Congolese authorities in the conceptualization of the police reform. This support was carried out together with other actors from the international community, such as South-Africa, Japan and Angola under the lead of the Congolese authorities. Although this was not their defined role, EUPOL RDC, together with UNPOL (civilian part of MONUC) took the lead in this process, partly because the Congolese representatives lacked leadership, yet partly to take and anchor a more extensive role in the Congolese police reform. This role of EUPOL RDC in Kinshasa – were all the conceptual work took place – has almost come to an end, and other European and international partners are ready to take over to accompany the Congolese police with the implementation of the reforms. Yet, both in Brussels and Kinshasa, it seems hard to bring the civilian EUPOL RDC to an end. In Brussels, it is the aspiration of particular member states to prolong operational presence in the Congolese police reform. Yet, this did

not lead to a significant update or extension of its mandate. In Kinshasa, EUPOL is very keen to continue its role as main coordinator, although this is not shared by the other European and international actors on the field (interview in Kinshasa 22.09.2009; interview in Kinshasa 23.09.2009).

This should be understood in view of the UK's presence and activism in the Congolese police reform. In addition to the support of the EU, also some of its member states develop security-related policies towards the DRC on an individual basis. In the police sector, for instance, the UK and particularly its Department for International Development (DFID) plays an important role, both financially and politically. The UK was seen as probably going furthest in developing general security sector reform policy guidelines (International Crisis Group 2006, 9; Davis 2009a 27-29). For the implementation of its programmes DFID cooperates with private consultancy organisations such as the PricewaterhouseCoopers. The involvement of private consultancies is remarkable and seemed to have a positive impact on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Congolese police reform. In addition to the UK, also other EU member states develop bilateral initiatives in Congolese SSR. France took, for instance, part in the training of the Congolese police, in particularly the Rapid Intervention Police in 2004 and has in 2007-2008 created the "Ecole de Formation des Officiers de Police Judiciare" and the "Laboratoire de Police Technique et Scientifique" (interview in Kinshasa 24.09.2009). Belgium plays an important role in training the integrated brigades of the Congolese army, in which it was already engaged before the launch of operation EUSEC DRC.

Apart from member states' bilateral initiatives and efforts in the EU framework, also other international organisations and arenas conduct security and defence policies towards the DRC. The UN and its various agencies play a central role in steering the international policy towards the DR Congo. The EU provides active support for the UN initiatives and in some cases also takes responsibility for part of the implementation of UN programmes. For instance, a part of the Commission's programmes are primarily aimed at supporting UN programmes (and NGO's). The first military ESDP operation in Africa, Operation Artemis, was in support of MONUC, the UN mission in Congo, and also the EU's support for IPU Kinshasa followed a request by the UN. Moreover the UN is an important framework for EU member states to implement policies in the Congolese police reform through the MONUC. As permanent members of the UN Security Council, the UK and France also play an crucial role through this framework. In addition to the UN, also other international or regional organisations play a role in the Congolese police sector. Important in this respect is the support from the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the latter chaired for two years (since September 2009) by the Congolese President Joseph Kabila, that are increasingly important as regional players in safeguarding the continent's security.

Specifically in the Congolese SSR process, also other international actors are involved in particular projects. Bilaterally, USAid concentrates on the reform of the military and judicial sectors, and has in 2007 cooperated with the European Commission and the International

Organisation for Migrants (IOM) on the formation and functioning of the Congolese border police. Furthermore, also the Japanese, South-African and Angolan governments are involved in the reform of the Congolese security sector. For South Africa and Angola, that are both members of the AU and the SADC, the intensive participation is part of a broader strategy to create more African ownership in international development policies towards the continent.

4.3. Resource dependencies, overcoming deadlock and effective problem-solving

The presence of this multitude of actors and projects illustrates the intensive involvement of the international community, and in particular of the EU and its member states. At the same time, these actors are driven by various interests, priorities, agendas and, most importantly dispose of diverse instruments and capabilities to realise their goals. Clearly, there exists a strong need for coordination among these actors' capabilities, agendas, actions and goals (see also Kassim, Menon, Peters and Wright 2001; Olsen 2007). However, coordination is a major challenge at and among multiple levels of governance. Especially in view of the varying (sometimes difficult) relations between different actors, both institutional and personal, coordination is hard to institutionalize and to be moved beyond a mere exchange of views.

The considerable financial capabilities necessary for the implementation of the police reform programme, approximately €1000 million for the coming 15 years (MONUC 28.04.2010), and the significant differences in the donors' efforts in financial, logistic or immaterial terms, create important dependencies among these actors. This shows especially in programmatic terms when progress of one actor's efforts depends on the activities of other actors. In this way, dependency entails the risk of an implementation deadlock when coordination among the interdependent actors lacks. However, at the same time, the differences among the actors in financial terms can also diminish the willingness to coordinate and can risk to create a 'competition' among the actors to implement solely 'their' programmes and priorities. This holds especially true for the biggest investors, such as the UK.

The UK Development Agency DFID provided more than £8 million for the training and equipment of the police, especially in the wake of the elections. Also after the elections, DFID has the most important budget in Congolese SSR. In the coming five years, the UK devotes £80 million to Congolese SSR in its "Security Sector Accountability and Police Reform" programme: £30 million for accountability and oversight capacity of security institutions, £40 million for the police reform, and £10 million for defence reform (UK, DFID 2008, 5). For the implementation of this programme, more than half of this amount, £45 million, has been granted to PricewaterhouseCoopers that has been given the responsibility to accompany the Congolese police in its reform (£40 million) and strengthen good governance and oversight capacity in security institutions (£5 million). Financially, PricewaterhouseCoopers is a more important actor than any of the other EU member states in the Congolese police reform (interview in Kinshasa 19.09.2009). Operationally, it has much more a business and output oriented approach in the implementation of its programme than most of the member states. It has been granted a first slice of this budget, and will be evaluated by DFID after two years.

Hence, this private consultancy is in Kinshasa to produce clearly defined, visible and measurable results and has no time to loose in this process. In comparison, the civilian ESDP mission that is involved in the Congolese police reform, EUPOL RDC has 'only' a budget of 6.02 million Euros and France contributed with 3 million Euros for the creation of the 'Ecole de Formation de Officiers de Police Judicaires' and the 'Laboratoire de Police Technique et Scientifique', in addition to its contribution to the ESDP missions. In this field, the contributions of the EU and the other EU member states remain significantly below the UK budget.

The case of Congo's SSR illustrates the potentials, but also the limitations of the EU's capacity to take up its responsibilities (see also Weiler 2009; Hoebeke, Carette and Vlassenroot 2007). The risk of deadlock in policy-making and the difficulties of effective problem-solving are the result of the multitude of actors involved, their complex and sometimes rigid formal interaction mechanisms, their semi-overlapping loyalties and the significant differences in resources, priorities and approaches. This deadlock and ineffective problem-solving occurs for the EU at multiple levels: at the European level, between the Commission, the Council and the member states; at the extra-European level, between the EU institutions, the EU member states and other international players; and between the EU, its member states and the Congolese authorities.

The latter is probably the most important actor as 'owner' and 'leader' of its SSR policies. Like all actors involved in Congolese SSR policies, the EU depends on its cooperation with the Congolese authorities to implement its SSR initiatives. However, in practice numerous problems challenge this Congolese ownership and leadership, which hampers the reception, implementation, and thus the effectiveness of the EU's SSR policies towards the country. An important explanation is the involvement of multiple Congolese Ministries in the SSR programmes (interview in Brussels 28.08.2009). It involves not only the Ministries of Interior, Security, Justice and Defence, but also the Ministries of Finance, of Decentralisation, etc.

However, the Congolese government is a very unstable one, and also at this level multiple problems arise with regard to coordination among these actors. First, the different ministries involved have different agendas, priorities, approaches, capabilities and interests in the different dimensions of security sector reform. Tensions arose, for instance, between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice on the status and the authority over the judicial police (OPJ) which paralysed the progress in the police reform for more than two years (interview in Brussels 28.08.2009). Also the relation between the police and the military forces is a difficult one, since the latter have traditionally a stronger role in the DRC and have received much more attention from the international community than the police or the judicial system. Second, the ministers themselves are often replaced, even multiple times a year, which impedes the continuity of the interactions, both at the personal and institutional level. Moreover, when a minister is replaced, also his cabinet is replaced and it is not unusual that important information disappears together with the minister and its cabinet. Third, in view of the vast size of the country it is a difficult job to involve all authorities from provincial and

local structures. In addition, the state levels are also object of an important reform plan that aims to restructure the Congolese decentralisation in new provinces. This restructured decentralisation has not yet been implemented, so coordination between the central and the decentralised levels are still taking place on the basis of the current structures (interview in Kinshasa 11.09.2009). In the future, however, coordination will continue with new actors in new structures. In sum, multiple factors hamper the Congolese government to take the lead in its SSR policies.

This has important repercussions for the international and European actors that have variable relationships with the Congolese authorities. 'To get things done' implies the involvement, support and acceptance of the Congolese government. However, huge differences exist between the EU member states and institutional actors in their approach and relations with the Congolese authorities. This is a significant element of power in the effective realisation of international SSR policies in the DRC, but also has an important impact on the relations between the actors involved. As has been argued, among the European actors, the UK is the most important one, for which an important part of its policies are executed by PricewaterhouseCoopers. PricewaterhouseCoopers, that is keen to proceed efficiently in the reforms and procure results in a short period of time, managed to develop very close and personal relationships with the relevant Congolese officials, such as the Inspector-General of the national Congolese police (interview in Kinshasa 22.09.2009). Both the British and the Congolese government seem to prefer this bilateral relations over the multilateral coordination structures established in Kinshasa.

EUPOL RDC and the member states that participate in it, on the other hand, take the role as guard and motor of the European and international coordination, mainly within the *Comité de Suivi de la Réforme de la Police* (CSRP) (interview in Kinshasa 22.09.2009). Moreover, the six member states that contribute personnel to EUPOL RDC – France, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, Sweden and the Netherlands – are those member states that are bilaterally only to a limited extent involved in the Congolese police reform. These actors, with EUPOL RDC on top try to strengthen to degree and intensity of international and European coordination, since the interdependency in terms of resources and problem-solving capacities is more present among these actors (interview in Kinshasa 22.09.2009; interview in Kinshasa 23.09.2009). Apart from France, these member states lack the necessary resources (material and/or immaterial) to conduct these SSR policies bilaterally and are therefore more dependent on common EU policies to pursue their specific goals. However, both their internal coordination and their coordination with the Congolese authorities are undermined by the possibility of other actors, for example the UK, to act more effectively on a bilateral basis.

The deadlock is in this way created by the uncoordinated bilateral programmes of the members states, and the variable relations of these actors with the Congolese authorities. First, the various European actors involved develop different programmes based on own experiences and following their specific approaches and goals. This results in overlapping and sometimes even conflicting programmes and approaches that hamper the effective problem-

solving of the EU. Second, the Congolese actors are confronted with these multiple external partners which places them in a relatively comfortable position, in which the European actors compete rather than coordinate their relations and interactions with the Congolese authorities, leading to an obstruction of effective progress.

A similar trend seems to exist in reform of the defence sector (see Merket 2009). While EUSEC RDC presents itself as the defender of the European coordination and a common European approach, both particular member states – such as Belgium and France – and the Congolese authorities seem to prefer bilateral contacts. In the reform of the Congolese defence sector, these bilateral relations are even more present since there does not exist a *Comité de Suivi* in this sector. In addition to the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Portugal, Sweden, Hungary, Austria and Luxemburg, France and Belgium contribute personnel to EUSEC RDC (Council of the European Union 2009). However in the reform of the defence sector, France and Belgium have been involved long before the EU and other European member states, and developed a wide expertise and good personal relationships with the competent Congolese authorities.

To the reforms of the judicial sector, the EU and its member states contribute through various instruments and programmes to justice, human rights and the rule of law in the DRC (see Davis 2009a, 2009b; Aertsen *et al.* 2008). In particular through the Rejusco project that was launched in 2006 and concentrates on justice in the eastern part of the country. Its overall budget (€11.5 million) is financed by both the European Commission (€7.9 million) through its EDF and particular member states (the Netherlands, the UK and Belgium) (European Commission 2006b). However, also in this sector progress in addressing problems of rule of law, human rights and justice at all levels is not systematically supported by the Congolese authorities themselves. Although the *Comité Mixte de la Justice* (CMJ) unites all relevant actors involved in the sector, European coordination occurs mostly informally, among a limited number of actors, such as the UK, the Netherlands, France and Sweden (Davis 2009a, 19-20).

Overcoming this 'competition', deadlock and ineffective problem-solving seems only to be possible through informal governance and the interplay between informal interactions and formal settings. Informal meetings with only the donors indeed manage to increase mutual trust among them. However, these informal meetings are not regularly organised. Mostly, they occur when specific problems arise, such as clear incompatibilities between donors' programmes or a discord in approaches. In this cases, the informal governance in the EU's SSR policies in the Congo does not avoid deadlock in a systematic way, but facilitates mutual understanding between the donors, strengthening their position towards the Congolese authorities, and in this way making their problem-solving efforts more effective.

5. Conclusion

This article concentrates on security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo and, more specifically, the EU's activities therein. In particular, we assess the implementation of these activities taking a governance approach. This allows for the comprehension of the multitude of actors, both state and non-state, involved in the implementation, and the variety of interactions and relations among them. From an intergovernmental perspective on EU foreign policy, a central role would be expected for the traditional CFSP/ESDP actors and for the largest member states in the Council. First, however, the nature of SSR implies the involvement of a multitude of actors, also beyond the traditional security actors and concepts. Non-state actors, such as PricewaterhouseCoopers in the Congolese police reform, can indeed play a crucial role in the implementation of SSR policies. Second, the fragmented and multi-layered nature of the EU's foreign, security and defence policy creates multiple complexities in terms of instruments, capabilities, interests and goals that procures a continuous need for negotiation and coordination, both formal and informal. As the EU involvement in the Congolese security sector reform policies illustrates, coordination and negotiation among external European actors is not always useful and necessary to overcome deadlock and produce effective problem-solving. Coordination indeed occurs between the actors that have the willingness to jointly tackle the problems related to SSR in the DRC and that are dependent upon each other in terms of resources. However, it is also often undermined by actors that prefer to engage bilaterally because they possess the resources to do so and the personal relationships with the Congolese authorities to be effective. The previous analysis and examples in the reform of the police, the army and the judicial sector indeed illustrated the dependencies and power among European actors and illuminated that their patterns of coordination are determined by the amount of money devoted to the sector and the – often personal – relationships developed with the Congolese authorities. This leads us to the conclusion that in the field (in our case in the DRC) resource dependencies, the risk of deadlock in policy-making and the difficulties of effective problem-solving should first and foremost be understood in terms of relationship with the Congolese authorities.

Finally, we want to raise the methodological challenges posed by researching the role and influence of civil servants and diplomats in a sensitive area such as security and defence. The research for this article – as part of a larger research project on European governance and SSR in the DRC – leads to some additional remarks. Firstly, this article points to the importance of detailed case-studies of specific fields of EU foreign policy. This article analysed one single case, which implies that we have to be prudent with regard to the generalisation of our conclusions. This also points to the need of having other cases being analysed through the same conceptual framework. Secondly, when analysing the informal dimension in a sensitive area such as security and defence, it is clear that it is not easy to find relevant and valid information sources. This indicates that studies of specific cases of EU foreign policy and crisis-management in particular cannot be based solely on an analysis of primary and secondary literature, but in the first place needs information obtained through interviews and – even more importantly – informal contact with the various relevant participants. The

relevant players will indeed often provide more easily sensitive information during informal contact than during formal interviews. Thirdly, it also makes clear that in order to obtain relevant information, the researcher must leave Brussels and the EU and do field work in the regions or countries that are subject to the EU's foreign policy. This is also important in order to gain a better insight into who the relevant actors precisely are (which can indeed not be seen from a Brussels perspective) and in order to be able to talk with these various relevant actors – particularly actors from the third country. This need to move away from the Brussels and European perspective, to conduct field research and to take into account a wider variety of actors beyond those that are traditionally analysed obviously makes research on EU foreign policy more complicated and also more costly – but also much more interesting and rewarding.

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Endnotes

[1] For reasons of confidentiality, the list of interviewees is not provided in this article, but is available with the authors.