Beyond Fashoda: Anglo-French security cooperation in Africa since St-Malo

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Long divided on defence and security issues, France and the UK broke with tradition when they signed the St-Malo agreement at the 1998 Franco-British summit. Against the background of conflict in the Balkans and the growing threat of abandonment by the United States, French and British leaders agreed to work together more closely on defence and security, thereby paving the way for a meaningful European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP).[1] This was, however, only half of the St-Malo agreement and will be referred to here as 'St-Malo I'. The other part, less reported at the time and frequently overlooked subsequently, was 'St-Malo II', the commitment by France and the UK to cooperate more systematically on African policy.[2] The precise terms of this cooperation were not spelt out, but it was made clear that the French and British governments would engage in some joint actions on Africa, either bilaterally or in a 'bi–multi' fashion (that is, with France and Britain reaching a common position then bringing other states on board).

Surprisingly perhaps, given the burgeoning literature both on ESDP and on Africa's security challenges,[3] there has been no attempt to explore in detail the bilateral partnerships at the core of European security policy. This article plugs one part of the gap by focusing on bilateral Anglo-French security collaboration in Africa. It begins by showing the lack of any meaningful UK–French cooperation from the colonial era to the years immediately after the end of the Cold War. Drawing on 150 off-the-record interviews with officials in London, Paris, Brussels, New York, Addis Ababa and Abuja, it then demonstrates how, in the wake of St-Malo, some degree of collaboration has indeed taken place in terms of the institutionalization of the security relationship, peacekeeping missions and military training activities in Africa. Finally, the article explains the recent evolution in Anglo-French security relations in terms of neo-

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[1] Tom Dyson, 'Convergence and divergence in post-Cold War British, French, and German military reforms', *Security Studies* 17: 4, 2008, pp. 725–74.

[2] The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) press release, 'St-Malo ten years after', contains a link to the 'full text' of the declaration that actually omits the Africa chapter: see http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=PressS&id=10435411, accessed 20 Oct. 2009.

[3] See e.g. Jolyon Howorth, *Security and defence policy in the European Union* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Bernard Franke, *Security cooperation in Africa: a reappraisal* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2009).

classical realism. This theory goes beyond neo-realism by focusing not on recurrent patterns of interstate interactions in the international system but on policy-makers' perceptions of the state's relative material power and the degree of state autonomy as variables in the making of foreign policies of individual states.

Before proceeding, it is important to sharpen the focus of the present article. First, it does not cover the security challenges of Africa in general or indeed explore the outcomes (or lack thereof) of Anglo-French security collaboration. Second, cooperation between the French and British defence industries is not the subject of this analysis, although joint procurement and moves to integrate Europe's defence industries are now realities that cannot be ignored.[4] Third, the study does not attempt to cover intelligence-sharing, owing to the difficulty of obtaining reliable data—although there are indications that the UK and France enjoy a semi-hostile relationship in this area. Under the '3Is' arrangement, information and intelligence are shared only with Canada and the US, while the '5Is' extends this arrangement to Australia and New Zealand. In each case France is excluded. Fourth, lack of space precludes treatment of the civilian dimension of security cooperation, such as police and security sector reform (SSR). There is some evidence of limited Anglo-French cooperation—or at least of avoidance of duplication of effort—in this field in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where the UK has given funding and the French have provided 'boots on the ground', and there have been attempts to fuse missions such as EUPOL (police) and EUSEC (security sector). In Guinea-Bissau, too, there has been some coordination of effort on SSR. Moreover, it is important to point out that there is some ambiguity regarding the civilian and military dimensions of SSR. The ambiguity can be discerned in the different perspectives that traditionally mark the thinking of the European Commission ('soft' civilian SSR) and that of the European Council (a 'harder' military/security perspective). In this article the emphasis will be on the latter.

A history of rivalry

Anglo-French rivalry was a feature of the colonial period in Africa. The late nineteenth-century scramble for Africa frequently pitted the French against the British, and this rivalry came to a head, bringing the two countries to the brink of war, when Lord Kitchener's British forces

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[4] For a summary of Anglo-French defence cooperation, see http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/Defence-cooperation.html, accessed 11 Dec. 2009.

squared up against Captain Marchand's French troops at Fashoda in 1898. Ultimately Marchand was ordered to withdraw, and as a result the term 'Fashoda syndrome' entered the French language as shorthand for Anglo-French rivalry, and more specifically British perfidy, in Africa. Such rivalry was attenuated by the Entente Cordiale in 1904, by cooperation during the First World War against Germany's colonies in Africa and by the ill-fated Anglo-French Suez expedition in 1956. But for a century after Fashoda, Anglo-French relations south of the Sahara were essentially characterized by competition rather than cooperation.

This rivalry continued during the Cold War and early post-colonial period. France adopted a 'voluntarist', unilateral military approach with pre-positioned forces in former colonies, advisers working closely with African governments, and military personnel embedded with African forces under the terms of French defence and military cooperation agreements with African states. UK policy, by contrast, was characterized by 'benign neglect'.[5] The British had no bases and undertook virtually no interventions (except in Kenya in 1963–4), although they did have military advisory and training teams working with the armed forces in former colonies. Furthermore, military academies in the UK, like their counterparts in France, took African soldiers from the former empire for training. All of this took place in a spirit of competition, occasionally even hostility, with France and Britain actually finding themselves on opposite sides over the Nigerian civil war in Biafra (1967–70). Indeed, these differences of approach were not confined to Africa, but reflected a wider lack of security cooperation at a European level and within NATO, particularly after France's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command in 1966.

This lack of cooperation continued into the years immediately after the end of the Cold War (1990–97). In this new context, France and Britain initially seemed quite prepared for multilateral military–humanitarian interventions, as the issue of sovereignty became less predominant; but events in Somalia in 1992 discouraged most Europeans as well as the US from undertaking such interventions. This reluctance was most clearly seen at the time of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, when the UK and US led the international community in its refusal to intervene and subsequently used the UN Security Council (UNSC) to limit the scope of France's Operation Turquoise, which was launched when the killing in Rwanda had largely stopped in

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[5] David Styan, 'Does Britain have an African policy?' in Centre d'Etudes d'Afrique Noire, *Afrique politique* (Paris: Karthala, 1996), pp. 261–86.

June 1994.[6] A similar scenario occurred in late 1996 when Britain and the US were instrumental in blocking French efforts to raise a multinational force to intervene in Zaire (now the DRC).

Throughout this period, Anglo-French divergences on security questions were compounded by the absence of a meaningful institutional framework within which France and Britain could work at a bilateral or bi–multi level. Franco-British summits provided a forum for wide-ranging discussions but did not focus specifically or even primarily on security issues. NATO was of limited use, even though from 1995 French President Jacques Chirac did begin to make overtures towards it. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) also failed to offer a forum within which security cooperation could be taken forward. The UNSC did provide a mechanism but could just as easily be used to block as to advance proposals, as the abovementioned examples of Rwanda and Zaire have illustrated. The same is true of the EU, where the UK hampered France's attempts to link up with the Germans within the purview of the Western European Union and through the creation of the Eurocorps in 1995.[7]

St-Malo: a discursive and institutional watershed
The pivotal moment which brought about a shift towards greater cooperation was the 1998 St-Malo summit. The St-Malo I declaration is mainly noted for its role in laying the foundation stone of the ESDP.[8] In particular, it stated that the European Council 'must be able to take decisions on an intergovernmental basis, covering the whole range of activity set out in Title V of the Treaty of European Union', and that 'the Union must have the capacity for *autonomous* action, backed up by credible military forces . . . in order to respond to international crises'.[9] The word 'autonomous' marked a crucial breakthrough, making it possible for the first time for the EU to intervene militarily outside the framework of NATO. This was a key French foreign policy priority. St-Malo II actually made no mention of security cooperation but simply committed the two governments to 'harmonise policies towards Africa and pursue close cooperation on the ground; promote the EU common position on human rights, democratic

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[6] Neil Fenton, *Understanding the Security Council* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), p. 140.

[7] Sebastien Loisel, 'Entente cordiale ou moteur européen?', *Les Champs de Mars*, 1st semester**{?}** 2004, p. 44.

[8] Howorth, *Security and defence policy*, p. 4.

[9] Howorth, *Security and defence policy*, pp. 4, 34 (emphasis added).

principles, the rule of law and good governance in Africa; [and] contribute to the stability of the continent' by focusing on debt issues and development assistance. The intention to cooperate in the defence field was made explicit at the Cahors Franco-British summit in February 2001.[10]

St-Malo I and II did not, however, simply mark a discursive watershed. They also served as a catalyst for efforts to create a more meaningful institutional framework within which the French and British, often alongside other northern states, could engage in bilateral or 'bi–multi' cooperation. Since St-Malo, the French and British have developed more specifically bilateral links. Thus, the Franco-British summits now always include a chapter on Africa, and the presence of both defence ministers at the 2001 Cahors summit symbolized the new spirit of cooperation in security matters. There have also been joint statements by UK and French defence ministers and joint visits by foreign ministers Miliband and Kouchner to crisis-ridden countries, such as the DRC in November 2008. Crucially, too, institutional bridges have been built between France and the UK through Anglo-French secondments of personnel. These have been designed to improve the two countries' understanding of each other's *modus operandi* in the peace and security field. To illustrate, the French and British ministries of defence exchanged *chargés de mission* from 2005 to 2008, stationed reciprocally in the central policy-making departments of the respective ministries. The French attach considerable importance to the exchange. However, the British abolished the post in 2008, which left one French official in London with no British counterpart in Paris. The UK also sent a British colonel to Paris as deputy director of EURORECAMP (discussed below). In addition, a French officer is embedded with British forces in Nairobi and a British officer was until recently seconded to French forces in Dakar, although this arrangement also came to an end in July 2009 as a result of British government cutbacks.

Significantly, too, St-Malo was the trigger for the creation of a number of fora in which cooperation and dialogue were possible at EU level, such as the Political and Security Committee (PSC) and the Military Committee. Anglo-French cooperation within the PSC has been a *sine qua non* for the approval of the ESDP missions (discussed below) and for a range of other initiatives on which joint actions or statements have been agreed, for example on Darfur

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[10] In 2001 the French and UK governments also agreed to 'promote subregional integration, in particular between networks of anglophone and francophone countries': document obtained from the FCO, 2 April 2001.

and Chad.[11]

Another significant attempt by France and Britain to develop closer ties between themselves and with the US has been the P3 initiative at the UNSC. While this informal mechanism for consultation between three of the five permanent Security Council members was announced in late 1997, it was not until after St-Malo that the P3 became effective as a forum for harmonizing British, French and American policies on peacekeeping, capacity-building and other security challenges in Africa and beyond. With around 70 per cent of the UNSC's business relating to Africa in recent years, the P3 has been an important arena for Anglo-French cooperation, particularly when the French and British ambassadors to the UN in New York have enjoyed a good personal relationship, and even more so when relations between the UK and US ambassadors have been strained, as they were between Sir Emyr Jones Parry and his truculent American counterpart, John Bolton.[12]

During the US presidency of George W. Bush, the P3 initiative would sometimes involve Anglo-French talks to coordinate their positions as a prelude to trying to get the US on board, for example when the British and French agreed not to invoke article 16 of the Rome Statute, which would have deferred Sudanese President Bashir's referral to the International Criminal Court for a year.[13] In a similar vein, the Qatar initiative to get the Darfur rebels to join peace talks with the Sudanese government was initiated by the French with support from the UK; subsequently the US came on board. The Anglo-French initiative, launched in late 2008, to improve UN peacekeeping mandates is also a good example of bi–multi cooperation, with the US now increasingly involved in the discussions along with the other P5 members.[14]

It should, of course, be noted that the P3 and EU are multilateral mechanisms, and France and Britain do not always share the same analysis within these fora. Paris and London therefore need wider support in these arenas in order to take certain initiatives forward. This is not always

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[11] 'Britain and France to make joint effort on terrorism and Darfur', 20 July 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/20/world/europe/20iht-france.4.6757003.html, accessed 14 Dec. 2009.

[12] Personal communications, former UK officials in New York and London, 2008.

[13] Personal communications, UK and French officials in New York and Paris, 2008–2009.

[14] This initiative now extends also to the C34 Special Committee on Peacekeeping, which includes around 120 members: communications with British officials in New York, 2009.

forthcoming, particularly in instances where France or the UK is deemed to be instrumentalizing the UNSC or ESDP to serve its national interests. France's promotion of the EUFOR Chad mission and Britain's stance on the 2003 Iraq war might be cited in this context. Nevertheless, the fact that both France and the UK are permanent members of the UNSC, key players in Europe and major actors in the peace and security arena in Africa does offer unrivalled scope for working together in areas of mutual interest before bringing others on board.[15]

France, Britain and the ESDP in Africa

There have been two main forms of Anglo-French security cooperation since St-Malo, namely peacekeeping missions and training African peacekeepers. We shall begin by focusing on the former, specifically ESDP military missions, of which there have been four in Africa: Operation Artemis in the DRC from June to September 2003; EUFOR, also in the DRC, from July to November 2006; EUFOR, in Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR), January 2008 to March 2009; and EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta**{?}**, which began in December 2008 and is still continuing.[16]

Artemis was the first 'autonomous' EU military operation (that is, conducted without recourse to NATO assets) and the first ESDP operation outside Europe. France was the 'framework nation' for the operation and provided the operational headquarters and the majority—90 per cent—of the 1,400-strong force on the ground, although the UK sent a special operations unit, which played a crucial role in resurfacing the runway at Bunia as all supplies had to be flown in. The UK also provided invaluable support by persuading a reluctant Ugandan government to offer airport facilities at Entebbe.[17] The operation was limited in time (four months) and had a mandate to protect civilian life and stabilize the humanitarian situation in Bunia (eastern DRC) following the withdrawal of Ugandan forces and the inability of the UN

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[15] Personal communications, former UK officials in London and New York, 2008–2009.

[16] There have also been other civilian/military missions in Africa: EUSSR Guinea-Bissau, 12 Feb. 2008–31 May 2009; EUPOL DRC, 1 July 2007–30 June 2009); and EUSEC DRC, 8 June 2005–30 Sept. 2010. These operations will not concern us here, as our focus in this article is on military missions.

[17] Niagalé Bagayoko, 'Les politiques européennes de prévention et de gestion des conflits en Afrique', *Les Champs de Mars*, 2nd semester 2004, p. 103.

force, MONUC, to prevent renewed violence. In the aftermath of European divisions over the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq, 'France badly wanted a mission to show the EU was capable of acting alone, where NATO would not be involved',[18] while London's motivation was mainly to prove that the UK was still interested in developing a European defence capability.[19] In this case Anglo-French cooperation was clearly the product of convergent agendas that were themselves the result, in the British case at least, of changing domestic policy preferences. This textbook operation was widely acclaimed and demonstrated that the EU could undertake a peacekeeping mission far from Europe's borders.

Like Artemis, EUFOR DRC was a time-limited and targeted operation. Its mission was to support the UN force, MONUC, in supervising the 2006 election process in DRC. Germany provided the operational HQ; the largest troop contributors were France and Germany; and the largest bilateral contributor to the elections (to the tune of £35 million) was the UK, although it sent no combat troops. Here, in order to appreciate how France, without any offer of manpower from the UK, was able to ensure the launch of such an operation, we need to look more closely at the wider European context. Needless to say, France, and for that matter Belgium, had a strong national interest in using the EU 'as an instrument to take care of their concerns for the DRC's stability'.[20] Paris also brought other states, notably a reluctant Germany, on board—despite German anxiety about potential troop losses{?}—thanks to the prevailing political situation in Europe. There was, in particular, a perceived need to reassert the credibility of the EU following the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty by Ireland, France and the Netherlands. In effect, EUFOR DRC was 'more about European form than African substance', with the 'actual reality on the ground in Congo [constituting] only a secondary factor'.[21] The EUFOR operation also needs to be understood against the backdrop of the adoption of the EU Strategy for Africa in

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[18] Catherine Gegout, 'Causes and consequences of the EU's military intervention in the Democratic Republic of Congo: a realist explanation', *European Foreign Affairs Review* 10{?}, 2005, p. 437.

[19] Personal communication, former UK official in New York, 2008.

[20] Gorm Rye Olsen, 'Conflict management in Africa: American and European Union policies compared', paper given at the 50th annual convention of the International Studies Association, New York, 2009, p. 18.

[21] *International Herald Tribune*, 13 June 2006, p. 8.

2005: the mission was seen as a test case for the strategy and a 'laboratory' for the ESDP.[22] More generally, there was a consensus between member states and the European Commission (EC) that the EU should contribute to conflict prevention and peacekeeping in the DRC, and EUFOR DRC also provided the opportunity 'to get some good coverage for the EU'.[23] For the UK, the stability of the DRC was of paramount concern: Britain was a significant contributor to SSR and, through the work of the Department for International Development (DfID), was one of the country's largest donors.[24] French and British agendas in the DRC thus converged, with Britain keen to ensure the success of the elections and France concerned to stabilize the country and to demonstrate once again the EU's capacity for military action.

EUFOR Chad/CAR was authorized by UNSC Resolution 1778. Described as 'a multi-dimensional mission to help create the security conditions necessary for reconstruction' in Chad and the CAR, it was mandated to 'protect civilians, facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid and ensure the safety of UN personnel'. Its scope was thus very limited: it had no mandate to address the underlying political problem in Chad, which is the refusal of President Deby even to talk to the opposition. Indeed, EUSR{?} officials were specifically instructed not to talk to the Chadian rebels.[25] France was the largest contributor to the operation (supplying 2,500 out of 3,700 troops) and the operational HQ was in Paris, although the force commander was an Irish lieutenant-general, Pat Nash. Like its forerunners, it was a time-limited operation and was presented as a bridging mission that would stabilize the humanitarian situation while a UN force was put together. EUFOR Chad/CAR handed over to a UN force, MINURCAT II, in March 2009.

France's support for this mission was based primarily on its concern for the stability of

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[22] Major-General Damay, French force commander, EUFOR Congo, quoted in 'The EU's Africa strategy: what are the lessons of the Congo mission?', discussion paper (Brussels: SDA{?}, 2007), p. 5.

[23] Howorth, *Security and defence policy*, p. 239.

[24] In 2007 the UK was the third largest bilateral donor, providing €121.3 million, behind Belgium (€153.1 million) and the US (€132.4 million) but well ahead of France (€52.1 million); see OECD, *Geographical distribution of financial flows to developing countries* (Paris: OECD, 2009), p. 122.

[25] Personal communication, EU official, Addis Ababa, 2009.

two of its key allies in central Africa, Chad and the CAR.[26] It also saw the operation as a way of further demonstrating the autonomous military capability of the EU,[27] and also as a way of involving other European powers more fully in burden-sharing in the region. For the UK, however, the prime concern was Darfur and the danger that events there could spark a truly regional crisis. The Foreign Office began planning for this eventuality ahead of any mission and, with help from the British High Commission in Cameroon, developed Whitehall's understanding of the Chad/Sudan situation and held a joint meeting with France on both countries. Yet Britain's Ministry of Defence remained cautious, refusing to participate in the mission and initially blocking funding for it. It was only after a high-level exchange between President Sarkozy and Prime Minister Gordon Brown that the UK sent two staff officers to operational HQ in Paris and two to the field HQ in Chad, as well as later unblocking the money and even cosponsoring the UN resolution that authorized the EU deployment.[28] This latter decision was no doubt prompted by grave concern in both the British public and the US administration over the situation in Sudan/Darfur, the wide reporting of the killings in Darfur in the UK media and pressure from British NGOs for 'humanitarian intervention'.

The above account does not, however, explain how the two countries succeeded in getting the agreement of other member states to the ESDP mission; Germany, in particular, suspected France of using the international community to shore up its own African sphere of influence, or *chasse gardée*, a concern also shared by the UK. In the end, EU support was forthcoming, primarily because both the UK and France supported the mission and thanks also to widely shared concerns about the refugee crisis and the possibility that genocide might be occurring in Darfur, which gave rise to a diffuse sense that the EU needed to be seen to be 'doing something'. From the limited perspective of Anglo-French cooperation the authorization of EUFOR Chad/CAR was a success.

Finally, Operation Atalanta broke new ground for the EU as the first ESDP naval operation. The UN passed a declaration, cosponsored by France and the US, which authorized nations to enter Somali territorial waters with the agreement of the transitional Somali government. This opened the door to Operation Atalanta, the objective of which is to 'contribute

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[26] Personal communication, French official, Addis Ababa, 2009.

[27] Olsen, 'Conflict management in Africa', p. 18.

[28] Personal communication, UK official, London**{?}**.

to the deterrence, prevention and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the Somali coast'. With stakeholders including the UN, NATO and nine other countries, Atalanta involves 1,200 personnel and 16 ships, not all from EU member states.[29] Crucially, it is the first ESDP mission to be led by the UK.

While there was widespread concern among EU member states about piracy off the Somali coast, this alone does not explain the EU's involvement or the specific configuration of the operation. From the French perspective, Atalanta offered another opportunity, in a new arena, to demonstrate the military capability of the EU. However, although France was instrumental in securing UNSC authorization, it had played a key role in each of the three other ESDP missions in Africa and was keen—for political reasons and also because of cuts in its defence budget—not to take the lead on this occasion. This coincided with concerns within the UK permanent delegation in Brussels that Britain, having participated in just one ESDP military mission, might be criticized for showing insufficient commitment to ESDP or to peacekeeping in Africa. Despite initial reluctance from the Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence in London, the naval chief of staff was keen for the UK to be involved and France was happy for Britain to take the lead. Northwood was thus chosen as the command HQ for the operation.[30] Again, this appears to be a successful example of Anglo-French cooperation. But it would be wrong to explain the UK's involvement primarily in terms of support for ESDP; it was, rather, a response to lobbying by private sector actors keen to maintain London's status as the city that hosts the International Maritime Organization and a major international hub for commercial shipping.

What conclusions, then, can we draw from these missions? The willingness to deploy European troops in peacekeeping and conflict management operations is a new feature of EU African policy since St-Malo. This willingness derives from the fact that the European Council, rather than the EC, is increasingly playing the lead role in EU African policy, as it is the Council that has been tasked with the planning, launching and conduct of ESDP missions. Within this intergovernmental context, France in particular has played a key role in pressing for EU military interventions. It has been successful thanks largely to British support, or at least acquiescence, within the European Council. There is a sense in London, Paris and Brussels that, when Britain

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[29] Giji Gya and Johann Herz, 'ESDP and EU mission updates', *European Security Review* 43**{?}**, March 2009, p. 2

[30] Personal communications, UK and French officials, Brussels; former UK naval officer, 2009.

and France agree, initiatives make progress. There are clearly synergies between the French and British positions, and from the UK perspective it is in Africa that there is most to be gained from these synergies. Nevertheless, cooperation remains far from automatic, and it is worth remembering that the UK intervention in Sierra Leone and French operations in Côte d'Ivoire were both largely unilateral, despite coming after St-Malo and being only partly driven by {?}interests.[31]

Training African peacekeepers

As well as cooperating to launch ESDP operations, the UK and France have been involved in training African peacekeepers. This section of the article will focus on three closely linked aspects of this training: actions taken under RECAMP (Renforcement des Capacités Africaines de Maintien de la Paix) and related initiatives; support for the peacekeeping efforts of the African Union (AU); and back-up given to African subregional organizations.[32]

RECAMP and related initiatives

By the mid-1990s, African states were increasingly sceptical about French military interventions and Northern governments—following their experiences in Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia—were ever more reluctant to intervene directly in Africa. Against this backdrop, France, Britain and, indeed, the US, all came to recognize the importance of Africans taking greater responsibility for peacekeeping on the continent. They also acknowledged that African forces could not be expected to contain instability on their own. Initially, they launched separate programmes: RECAMP (France), the African Peacekeeping Training Support Programme (UK) and the African Crisis Response Initiative or ACRI (US). However, the three countries quickly realized that these programmes needed to be coordinated and in late 1997 announced the 'P3 initiative' (discussed above), in an effort to harmonize their capacity-building programmes in Africa and

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[31] France nonetheless offered diplomatic support to the UK intervention in Sierra Leone. The UK also backed France's request for UN peacekeepers in Côte d'Ivoire and financed a Ghanaian contingent subsequently deployed under UN auspices: see Loisel, 'Entente cordiale', p. 52.

[32] French and British approaches to, and policy towards, ECOWAS and the AU will be the subject of future articles by Tony Chafer.

also to get other actors involved.[33] Subsequently, in 2001, the UK's training programme was absorbed into a much larger initiative, the Conflict Prevention Pool (CPP), which included one fund specifically for Africa and another for conflicts arising elsewhere in the world. Under both the Africa and the Global CPP programmes, the Foreign Office, DfID and Ministry of Defence pooled their budgets for promoting conflict prevention and peace, with the Cabinet Office providing coordination at ministerial level. This was an example of 'joined-up thinking' by Tony Blair's New Labour administration.

The Africa CPP's priorities were laid out in a jointly agreed UK Sub-Saharan Africa Strategy for Conflict Prevention, with activities being programmed and agreed annually. Its budget for 2005–2006 was £60 million. This was a modest sum in the context of overall DfID spending, but the Pool was principally seen as a 'catalyst to ensure coherence and effectiveness of UK intervention'.[34] However, while the programme reflected much greater commitment to training and military exercises than was ever evident under the previous Conservative administration, the Pool has essentially functioned as a bilateral mechanism providing peace support in selected priority countries, such as Sierra Leone, and no formal mechanisms have been created for cooperation with other powers in the area of conflict management.

As for RECAMP, this represented a more substantial refocusing of France's security policy, away from its traditional unilateral approach towards a more multilateral approach designed to develop the capability of African armed forces to conduct their own peacekeeping operations. RECAMP sought to contribute to this objective in three ways: through support for military training schools involved in training African soldiers for peacekeeping; through peacekeeping training for African units in subregional training exercises; and through equipment and logistical support for units engaged in peacekeeping.

With respect to the training of African peacekeepers, the UK and France took steps, in the context of RECAMP and in conjunction with the US, to coordinate their provision in West Africa by establishing a regional network of training centres that would complement each other and reduce duplication. Thus, the focus of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra, which was initially UK-funded, is on operational level training; the Ecole de

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[33] Franke, *Security cooperation in Africa*, p. 78.

[34] 'Africa Conflict Prevention Pool: the UK sub-Saharan strategy for conflict prevention', n.d. [2004], http://www.operations.mod.uk/africa/ACPPstrategy.pdf, accessed 30 Nov. 2009.

Maintien de la Paix in Bamako undertakes tactical-level training (the UK is represented on the School's board) and receives support from the EU and several member states, as well as from the US, Canada and a number of other donors; and the National Defence College in Abuja undertakes strategic-level training.

The work of these centres is complemented by the efforts of a network of regional military training schools, established by the French in 1997 to provide training that meets 'the needs of African army officers [and is] equal in quality to that provided in France while being adapted to local realities and resources'.[35] There are now 14 such schools in eight francophone African countries. Some have been designated ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) centres of excellence and so now are eligible for EU funding. Like the three schools mentioned above, they are run by the hosting nations and recruit, in principle, throughout the region. However, as all are situated in francophone Africa and French is normally the language of instruction, their recruitment comes largely from francophone countries. This francophone bias has led critics to argue that RECAMP actually deepened 'the Francophone–Anglophone divide that is endemic in West Africa' and even undermined the subregion's security efforts.[36]

These criticisms are less easily levelled against RECAMP's successor, EURORECAMP. This latter initiative emerged in the wake of the December 2007 EU summit in Lisbon during which agreement was reached on the Africa–EU Strategic Partnership, one of the four key aims of which was 'to strengthen and promote peace, security, democratic governance and human rights . . . and regional and continental integration in Africa'.[37] It was in this post-Lisbon context that France and the UK took the lead in transforming RECAMP, originally a national initiative, into an EU programme, EURORECAMP. Based in Paris, as France is the 'framework nation' designated by the EU, EURORECAMP has a French general as its director and a British officer

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[35] 'Les Ecoles Nationales à Vocation Régionale', http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/actions-france_830/defense-securite_9035/cooperation-securite-defense_9037/les-ecoles-nationales-vocation-regionale_12533/une-force-integration_26394.html, accessed 26 Nov. 2009.

[36] John M. Kabia, *Humanitarian intervention and conflict resolution in West Africa: from ECOMOG to ECOMIL* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), p. 185.

[37] 'The Africa-EU strategic partnership', p. 2, http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/pdf/eas2007_ joint_strategy_en.pdf, accessed 9 Nov. 2009.

as its deputy director. Like RECAMP, it aims to strengthen African peacekeeping capacity through education and training. Unlike its predecessor, however, it is 'guided by the principle of African ownership', and its focus is much more explicitly on enabling the AU and Africa's regional organizations to contribute more effectively to regional security.[38] A good example of this new focus by EURORECAMP is the launch in 2008 of its first training cycle, Amani Africa, ('Amani' means 'peace' in Swahili), which is discussed below.

Support for AU peacekeeping efforts

French and British interest in providing support to Africa-wide peacekeeping efforts was heightened when, in 2002, the AU replaced the OAU and moved away from a stance based on absolute respect for national sovereignty to one that took greater account of the responsibility to protect.[39] The UK, France and other EU member states backed AU efforts to develop a framework for crisis management on the African continent, namely the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). This framework, which was launched in 2002, provided among other things for the creation of a political decision-making body, the Peace and Security Council; an intelligence-gathering and analysis centre, the Continental Early Warning System; an external mediation and advisory body (the Panel of the Wise); and a military element or operational arm, the African Standby Force (ASF).[40] While the UK, France and other EU member states did provide limited support to this initiative, particularly through the Africa Peace Facility (e.g. over €300 million to the AU mission in Sudan, AMIS),[41] this backing was limited to conflict prevention work and not well targeted prior to the adoption of the EU Strategy for Africa in 2005 and its successor, the joint Africa–EU Strategy, in 2007.

One of the key objectives of this joint strategy is to strengthen African capacities, not

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[38] 'The Africa–EU strategic partnership', p. 5.

[39] Musifiky Mwanasali, 'From non-interference to non-indifference', in John Akokpari, Angela Ndinga-Muvumba and Tim Murithi, eds, *The African Union and its institutions* (Sunnyside{?}: Fanele, 2009), pp. 42–4.

[40] The ASF is divided into five regions, North, South, East, West and Central, and will draw on military and civilian resources from a combination of some or all of these regions.

[41] The African Peace Facility is a financing scheme set up by the EU in 2004 to strengthen the ability of the AU to engage in peace support and peacekeeping operations in Africa.

least in the security field.[42] The strategy is delivered through 'strategic partnerships', the first of which focuses on peace and security and identifies three priority actions: ensuring predictable funding for Africa-led peace support operations; enhancing dialogue on challenges to peace and security; and fully operationalizing APSA. Keen to ensure that France does not dominate the peace and security agenda, Britain has, together with the EC, led on establishing a predictable funding mechanism. A French general, Pierre-Michel Joana, formerly special adviser to Javier Solana for African peacekeeping capabilities, takes the lead, alongside the EC, on the second priority issue, while France shares the lead with Italy on the third priority, namely operationalization of the APSA.

It was with a view to operationalizing APSA that the Amani Africa cycle was launched in November 2008 at the AU–EU ministerial Troika in Addis Ababa. The focus of this cycle (2008–10) is to assist the AU in its decision-making for crisis management at continental level and in its validation of the ASF, which was due to be operational by 2010 but is well behind schedule. The cycle is conducted in two phases: the first covers diplomatic aspects, initial planning, and the elaboration of a mandate, concept of operation and rules of engagement, and the second covers deployment and conduct of the mission. The UK is the largest financial contributor to Amani Africa while France takes the lead role in agenda-setting and implementation as the framework nation for the EURORECAMP programme.[43] In practice, however, both continue to provide a significant proportion of their support for APSA on a bilateral basis. The UK, through its CPP, is one of the largest bilateral donors to APSA, whereas France is one of the smallest. However, France plays a much more prominent role than the UK in supporting peacekeeping training exercises in Africa, thanks to its pre-positioned forces, totalling some 9,000 personnel, in Dakar, Libreville, Djibouti and La Réunion.[44] As a result, it often

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[42] Assessment report, Joint Africa–EU Strategy, 9 Oct. 2009, {?}ec.europa.eu/development/ icenter/repository/jaes_assessment_report_20091010_en.pdf, accessed 5 Jan. 2010.

[43] Camilla Elowson, 'The joint Africa–EU strategy: a study of the peace and security partnership', FOI (Swedish Defence Research Agency), March 2009, pp. 62–3, http://www.foi.se/upload/projects/Africa/foir2736.pdf, accessed 5 Jan. 2010.

[44] See Niagalé Bagayoko, *The EU and the member states: the African capabilities building programs* (Paris: Centre d'Analyse Stratégique, 2007), p. 2: 'France's objective is to make the RECAMP concept "the operator of reference" for the ESDP in Africa, [while] the United

prefers to undertake capacity-building initiatives on its own, rather than in conjunction with other partners.[45] French and, to some extent, British reluctance to give up or share sovereignty over African policy or to lose autonomy over spheres of influence, and a more general lack of willingness on the part of EU member states to pass on information about what they are doing bilaterally with the AU, remain significant obstacles to more effective cooperation.[46] Success in overcoming these obstacles often has a lot to do with individual personalities.

Support for African subregional organizations

France and the UK have also been keen to bolster the peacekeeping capacity of African regional organizations, such as ECOWAS and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in East Africa (IGAD). As mentioned above, the French and British first began to collaborate on African regional military exercises within the framework of RECAMP. For example, the UK contributed equipment to the RECAMP exercise Tanzanite in 2001 and France took part in the UK-led map exercise, Blue Pelican, at the ECOWAS executive secretariat meeting in November 2000. Subsequently, between 2002 and 2006, the UK, alongside some other EU member states, provided ad hoc support to RECAMP military exercises. This was mainly in the form of logistical support, but was not on a large scale, was not linked to any institutional partnership and was largely symbolic. The UK nonetheless did provide more substantial support to a Franco-ECOWAS military training exercise in December 2007, which was funded 50 per cent by France and 25 per cent by Britain. However, since 2009 a combination of budgetary constraints and a strategic review of Foreign Office priorities have led to cuts in spending on peace and security in Africa, including a reduction in support for ECOWAS—for example, the UK has withdrawn support for the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra—with the result that funds for such joint initiatives seem less likely to be forthcoming in the future.

France and the UK have undoubtedly helped ECOWAS to develop its peacekeeping capability. The two countries have often collaborated particularly effectively at the operational

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Kingdom highly values its bilateral activities, designed to meet African rather than EU requirements.'

[45] Personal communications, British and Danish officials, Addis Ababa, 2009.

[46] Coordination and disclosure of information are especially poor on action against landmines and on policing.

level in immediate problem-solving on the ground, for example ensuring that a training exercise is able to go ahead. However, Anglo-French cooperation has been far from systematic at the political or strategic level. A case in point is their different approaches to the East African Brigade (EASBRIG) of the ASF. The British initially took the lead in supporting EASBRIG but, in so doing, ran into problems with the French, who have generally been reluctant to acknowledge UK leadership. In 2007, for instance, France provided a secure LAN{?} for EASBRIG without discussing it with the UK. Such problems arise because, once again, there is no formal mechanism for deciding what the two countries can or should do together.

Theoretical framework

How, then, are we to account for this significant yet ultimately limited Anglo-French security cooperation in terms of neo-classical realism? This theoretical framework goes beyond neo-realism by seeking to explain not the pattern of outcomes of state interactions but the behaviour of individual states. It focuses on interests, preferences and power, as well as incorporating domestic political variables within foreign policy analysis. As Gideon Rose has observed, 'Neo-classical realism argues that the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven first and foremost by the country's relative material power. Yet . . . the impact of power capabilities . . . is indirect . . . because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening unit-level variables, such as decision-makers' perceptions and state structure.'[47] In other words, the systemic structure is not determinative, and states, through policy processes, do have some capacity for choice.

The key point to stress is that neo-classical realism builds on the neo-realist assumption that both France and the UK are ultimately driven by concern over their relative power within the international system. Few would question that this assumption holds true in the case of France's unashamedly realist African policy. However, on the face of it, a neo-classical realist perspective would appear to ignore claims by Britain's New Labour government to be pursuing a value-driven, ethically aware and often humanitarian approach towards the world's poorest continent. In reality, however, neo-classical realism does take account of this 'idealism', seeing it as a useful means of mobilizing public support behind a policy that might not be intrinsically

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[47] Gideon Rose, 'Neo-classical realism and theories of foreign policy', *World Politics* 51: 1, 1998, abstract and p. 146.

appealing (e.g. increasing overseas aid during a global financial crisis),[48] garnering votes from a younger and more engaged electorate, and demonstrating the capacity of the British state to get things done in Africa.[49]

If we now turn to the drivers towards greater Anglo-French security cooperation in Africa in the late 1990s, a key factor, under the reformist government of Lionel Jospin, was France's wish to shed its reputation as the 'gendarme of Africa'. After the debacle of its involvement in Rwanda and former Zaire in the mid-1990s, France was keen both to restore its image in Africa and to draw down discreetly from its costly African bases. Both these objectives pointed to the need for a more multilateral approach. Thus, French military policy in Africa sought to shift the risks associated with intervention by obtaining prior UN or EU approval and through burden-sharing with its allies, notably in ESDP and other peacekeeping operations. There was also a growing recognition of the need to realign diplomatic and military efforts with France's key commercial interests, which were increasingly in anglophone, not francophone, Africa.[50] Finally, on the security front, France was becoming disillusioned with the UN's peacekeeping efforts and looking to the EU and NATO to play a greater role.[51]

On the UK side, the drivers were quite different. The New Labour government under Tony Blair was beginning its move towards a policy of re-engagement with Africa. However, given the regional, and often continent-wide, nature of the security and development challenges facing Africa, the UK could not effectively re-engage without having a relationship with francophone Africa, and this meant cooperating with France on policy. Second, the creation of DfID, much of whose work is focused on Africa, helped to keep Africa centre-stage in policy terms, notably within the Cabinet, in a way that had not previously been the case. Finally and crucially, as Prime Minister Tony Blair needed to deliver on his promise to 'put the UK at the

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[48] Both Labour and Conservative parties in the UK have pledged to meet the UN aid target of 0.7% of GNP by 2013: see http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/jun/12/government-spending-plans-labour-conservative, accessed XX XXXX 2010{?}..

[49] Julia Gallagher, 'Healing the scar? Idealizing Britain in Africa', *African Affairs* 108: 432, pp. 435–51.

[50] France's two largest trading partners in sub-Saharan Africa are South Africa and Nigeria.

[51] Rachel Utley, 'A means to wider ends?', in R. Utley, ed., *Major powers and peacekeeping* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 65–7.

heart of Europe'. Following Britain's failure to join the euro, cooperation on African policy—particularly in the security field—provided an arena in which the UK could play a central role within the EU.[52] That this was a propitious domain for cooperation had already been demonstrated by the understanding that developed between the French and British armed forces during the crisis in Bosnia.[53]

Thus the St-Malo process was launched at a key moment, when both France and the UK were anxious about their continuing status as permanent members of the UNSC and about their relative loss of influence, the former particularly in Africa and the latter in Europe. As a result, the two countries had complementary interests pushing them towards closer and mutually beneficial cooperation. Clearly, by working together in the security domain, these two middle-ranking powers, with similar levels of defence expenditure, could increase their influence over European security—a fact of no small significance at a time of heightened British fears and nascent French concerns about abandonment by the US. By coordinating their positions, the UK and France could generally sway the PSC and other military committees in the EU as well as have an impact at the global level, notably within the P3.[54] By collaborating, they could help to keep the Africa–EU Strategic Partnership on track and ensure that European Development Fund monies continue to be earmarked to support European peacekeeping initiatives in Africa. They could also—importantly in an age of rapid international media coverage—better respond to the often trans-sovereign security-related threats arising from Africa, be they from illegal immigration, the spread of AIDS, drugs trafficking, money laundering, international criminal activity or indeed the risk of genocide in fragile states such as the DRC and Sudan.

By the early 2000s, other factors and events were also pushing the UK and France to collaborate. The first of these was the Al-Qaeda attacks of 11 September 2001, which gave a boost to the idea of security and defence cooperation and contributed to the growing emphasis that has been placed on security in EU African policy since 2001. The second was the emergence of seemingly intractable crises in countries such as Côte d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe. As the former

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[52] Tom Porteous, *Britain in Africa* (London: Zed, 2008), pp. 5–15.

[53] Personal communication, former British naval officer who served under French command off Bosnia in 1999, Portsmouth, 2008.

[54] France and the UK are expected under article 19 of the Amsterdam Treaty to brief the other member states on UNSC proceedings and to represent the positions of the EU at the Council.

colonial powers, France and the UK had to deal with these crises, and each needed the other's political support in order, at the very least, to avoid tripping each other up. Thus, France aligned its stance on Zimbabwe with that of the UK government, while the latter gave tacit political support to the French in Côte d'Ivoire.[55] The third catalyst was the Iraq war, which initially led to deep divisions within Europe and at the UNSC, where France and the UK competed aggressively for the votes of African Security Council members (Angola, Cameroon, Guinea) in relation to the proposed second UN resolution. In the end, however, the invasion of Iraq actually encouraged France and the UK to look for areas for cooperation in other parts of the world, not least Africa.[56] Indeed, the Franco-British summit declaration of November 2003 laid considerable emphasis on the two governments' commitment to cooperation in Africa and 'to the continued development of the EU's capacity to take decisions and act in crisis management'.[57] A final factor has been the emergence of new partners for African countries that are playing an ever greater role in the continent (China, India, Japan and the Middle East countries). The UK and France have, in recent years, become increasingly less significant in Africa's foreign relations, with the result that their power to do things in Africa and their leverage over African leaders have declined. This has put further pressure on British and French governments to pool their efforts in order to maintain their relative influence.[58]

Given these pressures to cooperate and the benefits that both countries derive from enhanced collaboration, it is perhaps surprising that Anglo-French cooperation has not been taken further. The explanation would appear to lie in the fact that French and British leaders have had to take account of other variables, not least their perceived divergent national interests, the

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[55] Personal communications, UK and French officials in New York, London and Paris, 2008. Anglo-French cooperation on Côte d'Ivoire was also motivated by instability in the neighbouring (Mano River Union) states of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea.

[56] Personal communications, former UK officials at the UN in New York, 2008. See also Loisel, 'Entente cordiale', p. 55.

[57] http://www.fco.gov.uk/resources/en/pdf/pdf5/beu_ukfr_nov03_defence, accessed 5 Dec. 2009.

[58] However, French concerns about Chinese economic penetration apparently outweigh those of the UK, which in 2009 provided $250,000 to support the China–Africa Business Council: http://www.crid.asso.fr/spip.php?breve58 and http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page18214, accessed 18 March 2010.

capacity of their states to act and the views of the wider domestic polity on state preferences. On the first of these variables, it is important to underline that Paris and London attach different relative importance to Africa and this, in turn, affects both their readiness to collaborate on African policy and the areas (often outside the former French and British empires) in which they seek to cooperate. For France, Africa plays a crucial role in enhancing its rank in the international pecking order, while for the UK Africa is much more centrally a development issue. There is also a key difference between them over NATO. While neither country would deny the existence of a 'spatial differentiation' between ESDP and NATO missions, whereby Europe operates in sub-Saharan Africa while NATO is active in more geostrategically important zones,[59] the fact remains that France sees cooperation ultimately as a way of affirming an autonomous European security identity (beyond even 'Berlin Plus'), whereas the UK sees the ESDP as complementary to NATO.

Furthermore, neo-classical realists would argue that the level of cooperation depends ultimately on the 'extractive capacity' of the two states. In France, the state's capacity has been limited by its membership of the European Monetary Union and by internal spending cuts agreed under the 2001 *Loi organique relative aux lois de finances*. The UK government has also faced budgetary restrictions, particularly in the global financial crisis of 2008–2009. Moreover, its long-term commitment to SSR is in doubt: in August 2008, the UK's two conflict prevention pools were combined, and in March 2009 the conflict prevention budget, which had never allocated more than £65 million per year to Africa, was merged with the Stabilization Aid Fund and the peacekeeping budget (which pays for the UK's peacekeeping responsibilities at the UN). In the process, the overall amount of funding for these activities was cut and the budget for Africa reduced to £43 million.[60] Significantly too, parliamentary and civil society constraints mean that the British government has more difficulty getting military missions approved than is the case in France, where the French president finds this comparatively easy. Other domestic constraints include, especially in the UK, the paucity of available armed forces owing to commitments elsewhere. The rise to prominence of DfID, which has no equivalent in France, is

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[59] Dyson, 'Convergence and divergence'.

[60] Hansard (Commons), 25 March 2009, col. XX{?}, http://services.parliament.uk/hansard/Commons/ByDate/20090325/writtenministerialstatements/part005.htmlForeign and Commonwealth Office, accessed 4 Jan. 2010.

another factor of which the British government has to take account in decisions about security cooperation in Africa. While DfID potentially offers new opportunities through the creation of the Africa CPP, this is not really intended for 'hard' operations of the type that France is particularly well placed to undertake thanks to its pre-positioned forces in Africa.

Conclusion

This article has demonstrated how France and Britain have, since St-Malo, built new institutional bridges and cooperated much more freely in ESDP missions and the training of African peacekeepers. It has also shown, using a neo-classical realist framework, that there have been clear limits to this collaboration between the two leading military powers in Europe, and that cooperation has often been a function of individual personalities. Clearly, the P3 initiative has enabled France and Britain to cooperate more at the level of the UNSC. The creation of the PSC has facilitated cooperation in Europe, as has the fact that France and the UK, as well as regularly holding the EU presidency, have increasingly been called upon to chair European Council meetings in African capitals in which European member states and incoming Council presidents, such as Slovenia and the Czech Republic, are not represented.

At the same time, there has been a convergence in understanding of the problems confronting Africa and of the link between security and development. Against the background of globalization, the emergence of major new actors in Africa and the heightened perception of the economic and strategic threats posed by events and situations on the African continent, France and Britain have felt the need to align their agendas, either bilaterally, as has happened to a limited extent in the DRC, or bi–multilaterally, as was the case with the development of the Africa–EU strategy in advance of the Lisbon summit.[61] However, there remains a strong sense of 'division of labour' between France operating in francophone Africa and Britain in anglophone Africa. Cooperation has taken place on particular issues, thanks to a shared understanding of challenges or an acknowledgment of the 'comparative advantage' of the other country. But it has not been systematic. Nor has it been accompanied by the degree of institutionalization that might be implied by the term 'partnership'.

The signs are that cooperation will continue to be patchy for the foreseeable future. There is, for example, evidence to suggest that the French are increasingly interested in developing a

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[61] Elowson, 'The joint Africa–EU strategy', p. 27, n. 48.

stronger security relationship with the US in Africa, notably in the Sahel.[62] On the British side, with the 2010 general election returning a coalition government led by a Conservative Party that has already distanced itself from mainstream centre-right parties in continental Europe{?}, there is reason to expect that the UK will play a much less constructive role in future ESDP missions. Furthermore, almost any future British administration is likely to consider with trepidation the idea, propounded by France, that such missions, given their sheer number and complexity, require the establishment of a separate European HQ operating autonomously from NATO. At the same time, however, future governments in both countries will be under pressure to make savings, which may push them towards increased burden-sharing in certain situations. Moreover, the creation of the European External Action Service in the aftermath of Lisbon will increase pressure for policy coordination as its role increases and member states seek to cut the costs of individual diplomatic missions.

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[62] Hitherto, this relationship seems to have been an exclusive one, although in 2009 the UK government announced its intention to reopen an embassy in Mali in response to the execution of a British national and the wider threat of terrorism, migration and organized crime.