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Why the EU Is Failing in Its Neighbourhood: The Case of Armenia

Lieve VAN HOOFF*

As the Arab Spring has made clear, the EU's strategic aim of being surrounded by a ring of secure, democratic, and prosperous friends has not yet materialized. While most previous analyses have found fault with inconsistent application of conditionality, this article locates the root of the problem with an the EU's institutional set-up. Starting from interviews and documentary analysis, it uses Armenia as a case study to demonstrate how competition within and between the European Parliament, the Council, and the Commission has led to internal, horizontal, and vertical inconsistencies that have seriously hampered the EU's capacity to promote reforms. If recent institutional reforms have been designed to address precisely these problems, sociological rational choice and historical institutionalism suggest that it remains to be seen to what extent these recent reforms and initiatives will be able to bring about a change substantial enough to make the EU more successful in its neighbourhood.

1 INTRODUCTION

As the Arab Spring has made clear, the EU, in spite of its ambitious plans and substantial investments, is not surrounded by a ring of secure, democratic, and prosperous friends. This article examines what has gone wrong in the EU's neighbourhood policy. If, in the light of recent events, politicians and scholars have looked South first and foremost, this article focuses on a country in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood: Armenia. This country is a good case study for two reasons. On the one hand, it displays the typical characteristics that the EU does not want to see in its neighbourhood: it is at war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, its road to democracy is still long and arduous, and its economy is in shatters.¹ On the other hand, it defies the traditional explanation for the EU's failure in its neighbourhood, that is to say, the inconsistent

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¹ N. Babayan, 'Armenia: Why the European Neighbourhood Policy Has Failed', *FRIDE Policy Brief* (Madrid: Pride, 2011), 68; S. Fischer & E. Lannon, *The ENP Strategic Review: The EU and Its Neighbourhood at a Crossroads* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2011); A. Hug (ed.), *Spotlight on Armenia* (London: The Foreign Policy Centre, 2011), 6.

application of conditionality: what went wrong in the neighbourhood according to previous scholars is that the EU, as a normative power, imposed noble conditions but behaved as a realist actor privileging its interests, above all energy.² Following the logic of this explanation, however, the EU's policy in the South Caucasus should have favoured Azerbaijan or at least have pressed for a solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as soon as possible. Thus far, neither has been the case. Had the EU acted as a true normative power, conversely, it would have given preferential treatment to Georgia as a beacon of democratization in the region. Except for a one-off donation made at an international donor conference in the wake of the August 2008 Russian-Georgian war, this has not been the case either. Under the current European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) funding programme, for example, Armenia (EUR 157.3 million) receives indeed slightly less than Georgia (EUR 180.3 million), slightly more than Azerbaijan (EUR 122.5 million) in absolute terms,³ yet per person or per square kilometre, it does far better than either of its neighbours. Why, then, has the EU nevertheless failed to make Armenia substantially more democratic or secure?

While previous accounts thus broadly fit within either the realist or the liberal paradigm, this article draws inspiration above all from the various new institutionalist approaches, which turn attention from interests and ideas towards institutions.⁴ This is not to say that ideas and interests play no role, yet in order to understand precisely which role, we must look at the institutional framework within which they are pursued. One of the core issues to be addressed will therefore be intra- and inter-institutional coherence. Using the terminology of Gebhard, I shall show that one of the main reasons for the failure of the EU's policy towards Armenia is the lack of internal, horizontal, and vertical coherence. Institutional incoherence has, moreover, been mirrored in academic

² V. Khasson, S. Vasilyan & H. Vos, 'Everybody Needs Good Neighbours: The EU and Its Neighbourhood', in *Europe's Global Role: External Policies of the European Union*, ed. J. Orbie (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 217–237, at 223; L. Simão & M.R. Freire, 'The EU's Neighborhood Policy and the South Caucasus: Unfolding New Patterns of Cooperation', *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 2, no. 4 (2008): 225–239; N. Mikheilidze, *Eastern Partnership and Conflicts in the South Caucasus: Old Wine in New Skins?* (Rome: IAI, 2009), 6–7; Fischer & Lannon, 2011, *supra* n. 1; C. Grant, *A New Neighbourhood Policy for the EU* (London: Centre for European Reform, 2011), 10. Commissioner Füle recently presented the same analysis in an address to Armenian civil society, at <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/armenia/documents/news/civil_society_speech_clean_20110429_en.pdf>.

³ See <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011_enpi_nip_armenia_en.pdf>, <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011_enpi_nip_azerbaijan_en.pdf>, and <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/country/2011_enpi_nip_georgia_en.pdf>.

⁴ See P. Hall & R. Taylor, 'Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms', *Political Studies* 44, no. 5 (1996): 936–957; S. Vanhoonacker, 'The Institutional Framework', in *International Relations and the European Union*, ed. C. Hill & M.E. Smith, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 75–100.

output on EU-Armenia relations,⁵ with scholars focusing either on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP),⁶ largely managed by the Commission, or on the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP),⁷ which falls under the exclusive remit of the Council. By not transcending these institutional divisions, scholars have reproduced them not only in the sense that they have copied them, but also in the sense that they have contributed to their continuation. Given the recent reforms in EU foreign policy, designed exactly to tackle issues of coherence and integration, it is high time for scholarship not only to follow suit and overcome compartmentalization but also to point out the pitfalls that the European External Action Service (EEAS) risks falling into. With the defrosting of the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh and a series of important elections, as well as the centenary of the 1915 events coming up in Armenia over the next couple of years, a comprehensive analysis and approach will come none too soon.

Methodologically, this article is based on interviews and documentary analysis. After a brief survey of the development and current state of

⁵ C. Gebhard, 'Coherence', in ed. Hill & Smith, 2011, *supra* n. 4, 101–127. Cf. also A. Duleba, L. Najšlová, V. Benč & V. Bilčík (eds), *The Reform of the European Neighbourhood Policy: Tools, Institutions, and a Regional Dimension* (Bratislava: Research Centre of the SFPA, 2008), 47–50; A. Akçakoca et al., 'After Georgia: Conflict Resolution in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood', *EPC Issue Paper 57* (Brussels: European Policy Centre, 2009), 34–35; Mikhelidze, 2009, *supra* n. 2; S. Schäffer & D. Tolksdorf (eds), 'The EU Member States and the Eastern Neighbourhood: From Composite to Consistent EU Foreign Policy?', *CAP Policy Analysis 1* (Munich: Centre for Applied Policy Research, 2009), 4; D. Sammut, 'The European Union's Increased Engagement with the South Caucasus', in *The Black Sea Region and EU Policy*, ed. K. Henderson & C. Weaver (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2010), 83; Grant, 2011, *supra* n. 2; and especially A. Huff, *The Role of EU Defence Policy in the Eastern Neighbourhood* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2011).

⁶ D. Irrera, 'Enlarging the Ring of Friends: Lessons from the European Neighbourhood Policy in the Southern Caucasus', paper prepared for the ECPR – Standing Group on the European Union (Riga, 25–27 Sep. 2008); C. Browning & G. Christou, 'The European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Dimension: Borders, Security and Identity', *Political Geography* 29, no. 2 (2008): 109–118; N. Babayan, 'European Neighbourhood Policy in Armenia: On the Road to Failure or Success?', *CEU Political Science Journal* 4, no. 3 (2009): 358–388; R. Giragosian, 'Armenia's Crisis for the Non-democrats', in *Democracy's Plight in the European Neighbourhood: Struggling Transitions and Proliferating Dynasties*, ed. M. Emerson & R. Youngs (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2009), 84–91; Human Rights Watch, 'Democracy on Rocky Ground: Armenia's Disputed 2008 Presidential Election, Post-election Violence, and the One-Sided Pursuit of Accountability', at <www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/armenia0209web.pdf>; T. Mkrtchyan, 'Armenia's European Future', in *The European Union and the South Caucasus*, ed. T. Mkrtchyan, T. Huseynov & K. Gogolashvili (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2009), 14–48; A. Christensen, *The Making of the European Neighbourhood Policy* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010); Babayan, 2011, *supra* n. 1; Fischer & Lannon, 2011, *supra* n. 1; Hug, 2011, *supra* n. 1; S. Vasilyan, 'The "European" "Neighbourhood" "Policy": A Holistic Account', in *The European Union and Global Governance: A Handbook*, ed. J.-W. Wunderlich & D. Bailey (London & New York: Routledge), 177–186.

⁷ A. Grigorian, 'The EU and the Karabakh Conflict', in *The South Caucasus: A Challenge for the EU*, ed. D. Lynch (Paris: Institute for Security Studies), 129–142; International Crisis Group, 'Conflict Resolution in the South Caucasus: The EU's Role', *Europe Report 173* (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2006); T. De Waal, *The Karabakh Trap: Dangers and Dilemmas of the Nagorny Karabakh Conflict* (London: Conciliation Resources, 2008); Sammut, 2010, *supra* n. 5; Huff, 2010, *supra* n. 5.

EU-Armenia relations, three sections examine the contribution of the European Parliament, the Council, and the Commission to those relations through a detailed analysis of the internal working of each institution as exemplified by recent important decisions affecting the EU's policy towards Armenia. The final section sums up how the EU's institutional set-up has affected its policy not only towards Armenia but also towards its neighbourhood more generally.

2 DEVELOPMENT AND CURRENT STATE OF EU – ARMENIA RELATIONS

In the years following the implosion of the Soviet Union, the European Commission established diplomatic relations with Armenia. In 1999, a Delegation branch was opened in Yerevan, which was transformed into a full-fledged European Commission Delegation in 2008 and into an EU Delegation since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. In the meanwhile, the EU had signed a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Armenia, as with its neighbours Georgia and Azerbaijan, which entered into force in 1999 and still forms the backbone of EU-Armenia relations today. The focus of the agreement is firmly on trade and trade-related issues, but political cooperation was also established in the form of a Cooperation Council at ministerial level (Article 78) and a Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) (Article 83).

While the EU thus built out bilateral relations with the South Caucasus states, it was much less active on a multilateral level. As far as the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is concerned, the EU has always shone through its absence: the 1994 ceasefire was brokered by Russia, and negotiations ever since have been mediated by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk group co-chaired by France, Russia, and the United States. Nevertheless, from 2003 onwards – with a brief but, as we shall see, significant interruption in 2011 – the EU has had a Special Representative for the South Caucasus, who could, in theory, deal with multilateral questions such as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Bilateral relations between the EU and Armenia received a further impulse in 2004, when the ENP was launched. Within this framework, an Action Plan sets out the priorities of EU-Armenia relations, financial aid is provided mainly through the ENPI, and Country Reports assess effective progress on a regular basis. Apart from an economic downturn largely linked to the global economic crisis, the main problems identified in the latest report, covering the year 2010, are twofold. First, concerns were voiced in the field of democratic reforms and the independence of the judiciary, particularly with regard to the violent clamp-down of street protests following presidential elections in 2008. This is

especially important in view of the upcoming elections for Parliament in May 2012⁸ and for President in February 2013. Second, Armenia has got a problematic relationship with many of its neighbours: relations with Turkey have been difficult at least since 1915; the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict troubles relations with Azerbaijan; and Armenia's cooperation with Russia complicates its relations with Georgia. After a brief period of hope, all of these axes of opposition and collaboration right now seem to be profiling themselves again more strongly. It remains to be seen what the impact or consequences of the EU's 2011 plan to step up the ENP's conditionality, thus turning it into a New and Ambitious European Neighbourhood Policy (NAENP), will be in Armenia.

At the Prague Summit of May 2009, the Eastern Partnership (EaP) was launched to embody the Eastern dimension of the ENP and to enhance it in several important respects. Thus on a bilateral basis, the EU is currently negotiating an Association Agreement with Armenia that will replace the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and integrate the Action Plan; at the time of publication, twenty-two out of twenty-eight negotiation chapters have been closed and the launch of negotiations on a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area has just been announced. At the same time, the EaP improves the ENP by adding a multilateral dimension. This dimension is organized around four thematic platforms (democracy, good governance, and stability; economic integration and convergence with EU policies; energy security; contacts between people) and brings the EU and its Eastern partners together on a multilateral basis in two-yearly summits, yearly meetings of foreign ministers, a parliamentary assembly called EURONEST, and a civil society forum. For the first time, then, the EU is effectively bringing Armenians, Azeris, and Georgians together.

3 THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: AN AMBITIOUS HOUSE DIVIDED

Although often neglected,⁹ the European Parliament has played an active role in all major EU initiatives towards the South Caucasus. While the Commission's

⁸ A survey of Armenia's political parties and their position under the current parliamentary term, as of the country's political history since the late 1980s, can be found in Hug, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 6–9.

⁹ Parliament's role in foreign policy, D. Viola, *European Foreign Policy and the European Parliament in the 1990s: An Investigation into the Role and Voting Behaviour of the European Parliament's Political Groups* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000); U. Diedrichs, 'The European Parliament in CFSP', *The International Spectator* 2 (2004): 31–46; A. Maurer, D. Kietz & C. Völkel, 'Interinstitutional Agreements in the CFSP: Parliamentarization through the Back Door?', *European Foreign Affairs Review* 10, no. 2 (2005): 175–195; F. Zanon, 'The European Parliament: An Autonomous Foreign Policy Identity for the European Parliament?', in *The Role of Parliaments in European Foreign Policy*, ed. Barbé & A. Herranz (Barcelona: Office of the European Parliament in Barcelona, 2005); B. Crum, 'Parliamentarization of the CFSP Through Informal Institution-Making?', *Journal of European Public*

initial proposal on 'Wider Europe' explicitly excluded the South Caucasus,¹⁰ for example, Parliament pleaded for the region's inclusion in what was to become the ENP.¹¹ Likewise, it was Parliament that pushed for a Special Representative to be sent to the South Caucasus.¹² As a result of the Lisbon Treaty (Article 218 TFEU), Parliament will now also have to give its consent to the Association Agreement that is currently being negotiated.¹³ That other European institutions got this message is clear from the invitation of a Member of the European Parliament (MEP), Tomasz Poręba (ECR, Poland), to sit in on the negotiations.

In May 2010, Parliament adopted Resolution 2216 entitled *The Need for an EU Strategy for the South Caucasus*. The first part of the Resolution discusses security issues and peaceful resolution of conflicts (points 2–17), progress towards democratization and respect for human rights and the rule of law (points 18–24), and economic issues and social development (points 25–32). The second part of the Resolution (points 33–56) sets out how the EU can, and should, contribute to the development of the South Caucasus in the areas discussed in the first part. Resolution 2216 thus shows a clear grasp of the problems facing the South Caucasus and makes suggestions for an EU strategy to tackle them. Coming shortly after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and shortly before the opening of association agreement negotiations with the South Caucasus states, as well as the formal launch of the EEAS, it is directed first and foremost at other EU institutions. Hence there are frequent frequent and explicit calls upon the Commission, the Council, and the High Representative of the Union for

Policy 13, no. 3 (2006): 383–401; C. Bickerton, *European Union Foreign Policy: From Effectiveness to Functionality* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 69–70. None of these discusses Armenia, and most of them have been outdated by the Lisbon Treaty.

¹⁰ European Commission, 'Wider Europe: Accepting the Challenge' (2003), 4 note 4, <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com03_104_en.pdf>.

¹¹ European Parliament, 'EU Policy towards South Caucasus' (2004), point 1, <[www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/seance_pleniere/textes_adoptes/definitif/2004/02-26/0122/P5_TA\(2004\)0122_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/registre/seance_pleniere/textes_adoptes/definitif/2004/02-26/0122/P5_TA(2004)0122_EN.pdf)>; J. Leinen & S. Weidemann, 'How Does ENP Work? A View from the European Parliament', in *European Neighbourhood Policy: Challenges for the EU-Policy towards the New Neighbours*, ed. J. Warwick & K.-O. Lang (Opladen & Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2007), 49–60; P. Kratochvíl & E. Tulmets, *Constructivism and Rationalism in EU External Relations* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2010), 127–136. For other reasons for including the South Caucasus, see K. Gogolashvili, 'The EU and Georgia: The Choice Is in the Context', in ed. Mkrtchyan, Huseynov & Gogolashvili, 2009, *supra* n. 6, 90–127, at 97 et seq.

¹² European Parliament, 'EU Relations with South Caucasus' (2002), point 7, <www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+TA+P5-TA-2002-0085+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN>; D. Lynch, 'The EU: Towards a Strategy', in *The South Caucasus: A Challenge for the EU*, ed. D. Lynch (Paris: Institute for Security Studies, 2003), 171–196, at 183.

¹³ The changes of Art. 218 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union compared to Art. 300 TEC turn Parliament into a 'strong policy-making power' (M. Mezey, *Comparative Legislatures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1979), 26) in this field. As such powers have earlier turned Parliament into a major player in other policy areas (D. Judge & D. Earnshaw, *The European Parliament* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 182–184), this can be expected in respect to agreements with third countries too.

Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission (HR/VP);¹⁴ hence there are also full references to Parliament's newly acquired right 'to be immediately and fully informed at all stages of the process of the negotiation of Association Agreements' (point 34) and to the fact that the Association Agreements 'will require the assent of the European Parliament' (provision I). Resolution 2216, then, was an ambitious parliamentary project to assert its influence over the Union's policy towards Armenia. In actual practice, however, it is difficult not to see it as a failure: Armenians criticized it for being 'non pro-Armenian',¹⁵ Member State diplomats and EEAS officials consider it proof of Parliament overplaying its powers,¹⁶ and MEPs who voted in favour of the Resolution have since then publicly rejected it, as became clear at the most recent PCC-meeting. If, as will be shown below, the Council and the EEAS might have been reluctant to follow Parliament's suggestions of a strategy for the South Caucasus anyway, the main reason why they, alongside other actors involved, could dismiss the Resolution so easily was Parliament's demand for 'the withdrawal of Armenian forces from *all* occupied territories of Azerbaijan' (point 8, italics added) – a demand that goes a step too far compared to the Madrid principle that the territories *surrounding* Nagorno-Karabakh be returned to Azerbaijani control.¹⁷ This contradicts Parliament's own support of the Madrid Principles in point 7 and as such undermines its internal coherence. In addition, it clashes with official EU policy. Although parliamentary resolutions do not represent official EU policy, such a statement by an important EU institution greatly hampered official EU-Armenia relations in the months following the adoption of Resolution 2216.¹⁸ Horizontal EU incoherence thus had a negative impact on the EU's external action, and Resolution 2216 backfired not only on the European Parliament but also on the EU as a whole.

The tenth EU-Armenia PCC meeting, which took place in December 2010, attracted much less attention not only within the EU and internationally, but also within the European Parliament: of the eighteen European Parliament delegation members, only four MEPs and a substitute attended. While this poor

¹⁴ Calls upon Commission: 18, 26–28, 34, 36–37, 41, 43, 45–46, 49–53, and 55; Council: 11, 27, 37, 42, 45, and 55; VP/HR: 17, 37, and 42.

¹⁵ See <www.ces.am/index.php/en/events/news/centre-news/122-artur-ghazinyans-interview-with-a1-about-the-resolution-2216-adopted-by-the-european-parliament17062010>. While many Armenians criticized the Resolution's rapporteur, Evgeni Kirilov, *ad hominem*, the phrase quoted did not figure in Kirilov's draft report but stems from an amendment proposed by Inese Vaidere (EPP, Latvia).

¹⁶ Interviews with Member State diplomats and EEAS officials.

¹⁷ M. Dietzen, 'A New Look at Old Principles: Making the Madrid Document Work', *Caucasus Edition*, 1 Apr. 2011, <<http://caucasusedition.net/analysis/why-nagorno-karabakh%e2%80%99s-status-must-be-addressed-first/>>.

¹⁸ Interview with European External Action Service officer.

attendance can be explained by MEP's busy agendas, it also shows that parliamentary cooperation with Armenia is not, for most members of the delegation, a priority.¹⁹ Nevertheless, a look at the meeting and the document it produced provides two important clues regarding Parliament's participation in EU-Armenia relations. The meeting itself showed deep divisions within the European Parliament along national rather than party lines. Indeed, while the delegation proportionally represents the various parliamentary fractions, fifteen out of eighteen members come from new Member States. To an extent, this is logical: like the French in the Mediterranean, the central and eastern European MEPs tend to have more interest(s) in the EU's Eastern neighbourhood.²⁰ The historical, political, and linguistic affinities they have with EaP countries sometimes effectively facilitate cooperation.²¹ At the same time, however, the shared experience, especially of Russian dominance, also risks to bias the delegation. As we shall see in the next section, many new Member States cultivate closer links with Azerbaijan than with Armenia. As a result, the uneven spread in national background of the delegation members disposes it less favourably towards Armenia. Indeed, during the PCC meeting, the strongest critic of Armenia was a Bulgarian, Evgeni Kirilov (S&D), while Armenia's most outspoken advocate was the only French MEP on the delegation, Damien Abad (EPP). At first sight, one might think here of a political rather than a geographical split, with the EPP supporting (Christian) Armenia versus the S&D (non-Christian) Azerbaijan. Yet the Lithuanian Vytautas Landsbergis, although from the EPP, aligned himself with Kirilov rather than with Abad. Against the general trend of increasing party and decreasing national cohesion in the European Parliament,²² the delegation members present at the PCC meeting are thus divided along geographical lines. The second clue is provided by the *Final Statements and Recommendations* that the meeting agreed upon.²³ The European Parliament draft call 'to put an end to all cases of violence against journalists' was replaced in the final version with the call 'for swift and thorough investigation of all cases of violence against journalists' (provision 18). A similar formative

¹⁹ On delegations, see R. Corbett, F. Jacobs & M. Shackleton, *The European Parliament* (London: John Harper Publishing, 2005); A. Herranz, 'Inter-Parliamentary Delegations of the European Parliament: National and European Priorities at Work', in Barbé & Herranz, 2005, *supra* n. 9.

²⁰ Corbett, Jacobs & Shackleton, 2005, *supra* n. 19, 57–59, and Herranz, 2005, *supra* n. 19.

²¹ M. Dangerfield, 'The Contribution of the Visegrad Group to the European Union's "Eastern" Policy: Rhetoric or Reality?', in *The European Union, Russia and the Shared Neighbourhood*, ed. J. Gower & G. Timmins (London & New York: Routledge, 2011), 51–57, at 52.

²² S. Hix, A.G. Noury & G. Roland, *Democratic Politics in the European Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 54–71. As Bickerton (2011, *supra* n. 9, 71) points out, however, Parliament generally suffers from a lack of political division when it comes to foreign policy.

²³ The fact that *Final Statements and Recommendations* were signed is an important achievement in itself, as became painfully clear at the last two Parliamentary Cooperation Committee meetings with Azerbaijan, where no such conclusion could be agreed upon.

Armenian influence on the text can be sensed in the reference to the ‘equal rights and self-determination of peoples’ (provision 22), which had been left out of Resolution 2216, or in the belief ‘that all parties to the conflict should become involved in the negotiation process’ (provision 23), voicing the Armenians’ wish that Nagorno-Karabakh be given a voice in the negotiations.²⁴ Nevertheless, if one compares the *Final Statements and Recommendations* to the Armenian draft, the Armenians also gave in on important issues: Armenian regret over Resolution 2216 was written out of the final version, critical remarks on Azerbaijan were avoided,²⁵ and all calls upon the Commission were abandoned. Notwithstanding the lack of formal powers held by parliamentary delegations as compared to committees, then, such signs of socialization form an important argument in favour of delegations.²⁶

The European Parliament, so we can conclude, is an ambitious institution: it eagerly uses any instruments at its disposal to push for stronger EU engagement in Armenia. Meagre attendance at the PCC meeting suggests, however, that Parliament’s aim in doing so lies not so much with a true interest in Armenia as with promoting its own position within the EU. While divergences of opinion, running along national rather than political lines, are easily sidelined in pursuit of this aim, Resolution 2216 shows that lack of internal coherence has jeopardized Parliament’s ambitions vis-a-vis Council as well as Commission.

4 THE COUNCIL: WINNING BY LOSING?

In the latest parliamentary debate on the topic, it was pointed out that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is ‘preventing the Eastern Partnership from succeeding’.²⁷ As an indirect approach has yielded no tangible results,²⁸ greater EU contribution to the resolution of the conflict will have to involve CFSP

²⁴ Compare the Armenian draft *Final Statements and Recommendations*, provision 36.

²⁵ Armenian draft *Final Statements and Recommendations* on regret: provision 4; on Azerbaijan: provisions 33–34; calls upon the Commission: provisions 8, 10, 11, 35, 44.

²⁶ J. Checkel, ‘International Institutions as Community Builders’, in *International Institutions and Socialization in Europe*, ed. J. Checkel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3–27, at 5–9; cf. Herranz, 2005, *supra* n. 19, 9; F. Schimmelfennig & U. Sedelmeier, *The Europeanization of Central and Eastern Europe* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2005). F. Schimmelfennig, S. Engert & H. Knobel, *International Socialization in Europe: European Organizations, Political Conditionality and Democratic Change* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 255, have shown, however, that socialization works best if EU membership can be expected.

²⁷ See <www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20110706+ITEM-014+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>. Cf. also A. Harutyunyan, *Neighborhood Relations between the EU and Armenia* (Budapest: Central European University, 2006), 34.

²⁸ Fischer & Lannon, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 2 & 5.

and/or ESDP,²⁹ which, even with the Lisbon Treaty in force, fall under the remit of the Council (Article 24 TEU). In this section, I analyse the Council's reasons for not making use of its powers notwithstanding Parliament³⁰ and Commission³¹ references welcoming CFSP involvement.

The key to the problem lies with a profound division among EU Member States. Although publicly accessible Council documents do their best to conceal these divergences of opinion, at least three elements of division can be determined indirectly via interviews or national policy statements. First, certain Member States have traditionally had closer links with Armenia, others with Azerbaijan. Greece, for example, has cultural-historical links with Armenia,³² and France is home to a 500,000-strong Armenian diaspora. As a result, Greece and France have often fostered Armenia within the EU. Currently, for example, France boasts that it 'a oeuvré, au sein des instances européennes, pour un lancement rapide des négociations sur le futur accord d'association'.³³ Other Member States have closer links with Azerbaijan. Germany, for example, has historical links with Azerbaijan and is considered Azerbaijan's most important partner in western Europe.³⁴ Azerbaijan – and this is the second point – currently accounts for 4% of all EU oil imports.³⁵ If energy has long linked Azerbaijan to countries such as the UK,³⁶ it has recently created new links, including with traditional friends of Armenia such as Greece.³⁷ As a result, more Member States now have an embassy in Baku than in Yerevan.³⁸ Whereas

²⁹ Unlikelihood of European Security and Defence Policy mission: Huff, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 35; other CFSP options: Harutyunyan, 2006, *supra* n. 27, 34–36; T. Diez & L. Cooley, 'The European Union and Conflict Transformation', in *The European Union and Global Governance. A Handbook*, ed. J.-W. Wunderlich & D. Bailey (London & New York: Routledge, 2011), 187–195.

³⁰ European Parliament, 'On the Need for an EU Strategy for the South Caucasus' (2010), point 11, at <<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2011:161E:0136:0147:EN:PDF>>; European Friends of Armenia, 'Europe's Options in Nagorno-Karabakh: An Analysis of the Views of the European Parliament' (2010), at <www.eufoa.org/en/publications>.

³¹ For example, <www.eeas.europa.eu/eastern/docs/com08_823_en.pdf> and <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com_11_303_en.pdf>.

³² Both Armenia (<www.president.am/events/press/eng/?pn=2&id=59>) and Greece (<www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/el-GR/Policy/Geographic+Regions/Russia-Eastern+Europe-Central+Asia/Bilateral+relations+Armenia/>) underline their shared cultural and historical heritage.

³³ Quai d'Orsay document made available to French MEPs.

³⁴ See <www.auswaertigesamt.de/DE/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Laenderinfos/Aserbaidschan/Bilateral_node.html>. Recently, however, the UK may be vying for that role. Cf. *infra*.

³⁵ See <http://ec.europa.eu/energy/observatory/eu_27_info/doc/key_figures.pdf#page=5>, Slide 7. Bulgaria, for example, imports 93.7% of its gas and oil from Azerbaijan (e-mail correspondence with Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 2011).

³⁶ Compare <<http://ukinazerbaijan.fc.gov.uk/en/about-us/working-with-azerbaijan1/a-history-uk-azerbaijan>>.

³⁷ Compare <www.mfa.gr/www.mfa.gr/en-US/Policy/Geographic+Regions/Russia+-+Eastern+Europe+-+Central+Asia/Bilateral+Relations/Azerbaijan/>.

³⁸ Baku and Yerevan: Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom; Baku only: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, the Netherlands.

Armenia may thus have had more influential Member States behind it at the time of the EU-15, the increasing importance of energy and the accession of new Member States may be tilting the balance towards Azerbaijan.³⁹ This is connected also to the third axis of division, Russia:⁴⁰ while Member States such as Germany and France are sometimes referred to as ‘friends of Russia’,⁴¹ the UK has been joined in its more critical stance by many of the new Member States, especially Poland, the Baltic States, the Czech Republic, and Hungary.⁴² Given Armenia’s close ties with Russia, ‘friends of Russia’ may be inclined favourably towards Armenia, as is the case with France, for example, while Member States that are more critical towards Russia may be more critical towards Armenia, as exemplified by some Lithuanian politicians.⁴³ Likewise, ‘friends of Russia’ may wish to refrain from intervention in the Russian neighbourhood, while other Member States may wish to step up EU involvement in conflict resolution in order to counterbalance Russian influence in the region.

Taken together, then, these three issues show profound divisions among EU Member States, with some more pro-Armenian, others more pro-Azeri, some inclined to intervene in Nagorno-Karabakh, others wary to do so.⁴⁴ The various dividing lines do not run in parallel, moreover: as the examples given make clear, Member States that are on the same side of one axis of division are not necessarily on the same side concerning the two others. The result for Armenia (and Azerbaijan) is that they can never be sure which Member States will support them in the Council, depending on the issues on the table. The result for the Union is a joint decision trap:⁴⁵ a common strategy is impossible to agree upon, and Member States pursue their own policy.

This analysis receives confirmation from a recent EU communication on neighbourhood policy, where explicit reference is made to the devastating impact

³⁹ Azerbaijan recently managed to get the title of an agenda point changed from ‘the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict’ to ‘the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict’. Compare <<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/10/st04/st04601-co01.en10.pdf>>. On Azerbaijan’s increasingly independent stance towards the EU; see T. Huseynov, ‘The EU and Azerbaijan: Destination Unclear’, in ed. Mkrtchyan, Huseynov & Gogolashvili, 2009, *supra* n. 6, 49–89.

⁴⁰ Huff, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 15–16 and 39.

⁴¹ Huseynov, 2009, *supra* n. 39, 58; Kratochvíl & Tulmets, 2010, *supra* n. 11, 136–173.

⁴² I. Albrycht, *The Eastern Partnership in the Context of the European Neighbourhood Policy and V4 Agenda* (Cracow: Kosciuszko Institute, 2009). The attitude towards Russia in new Member States such as Poland and the Baltics has recently changed. Cf. Huff, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 16.

⁴³ The classic example is the EPP-MEP Vytautas Landsbergis. For example, <www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=//EP//TEXT+CRE+20110706+ITEM014+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN&query=INTERV&detail=3-528-000>.

⁴⁴ Russia and the US share the same dilemma. Cf. De Waal, 2008, *supra* n. 7, 4.

⁴⁵ F. Scharpf, ‘The Joint-Decision Trap: Lessons from German Federalism and European Integration’, *Public Administration* 66, no. 3 (1988): 239–278.

of division and competition between Member States,⁴⁶ as well as from tangible negative consequences of such disagreements. There is, for example, the EU's absence in the OSCE Minsk group, currently co-chaired by France, Russia, and the United States. While the EU has expressed its readiness 'to step up its involvement in formats where it is not yet represented, for example, the OSCE Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict',⁴⁷ France is not willing to cede its place.⁴⁸ The official explanation is that it would be counterproductive to change the chairmanship now that negotiations find themselves in the critical last phase. Yet judging by what was said in the previous paragraph, there may well be other reasons at play, as exemplified by a recent debate in the *Assemblée nationale*, where Alain Juppé paid lip service to '*les principes de base*'⁴⁹ but confirmed that '*bien entendu, le droit des peuples à disposer d'eux-mêmes constitue pour nous le principe fondamental de tout règlement de ce conflit*'.⁵⁰ Other EU Member States, of course, have different views on what should be the guiding principle(s) in solving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In Council discussions on Nagorno-Karabakh, Cyprus, for example, has always promoted the sole principle of territorial integrity.⁵¹

If this first example thus shows how division among Member States impedes progress in conflict resolution, the second case illustrates that it can even cause actual setbacks. Indeed, in 2010, Member States decided not to renew Mr Semneby's mandate as Special Representative for the South Caucasus: the delegations in Yerevan and Baku, upgraded to EU delegations as a result of the Lisbon Treaty and the establishment of the EEAS, would take over his role. As was soon pointed out, however, EU delegations, being bilateral institutions, are unable to deal with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.⁵² In reaction to such

⁴⁶ European Commission, 'A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood: A Review of European Neighbourhood Policy' (2011), 5, at <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com_11_303_en.pdf>.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁸ Compare Sammut, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 83, and Huff, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 35.

⁴⁹ This refers to the Helsinki Final Act principles of non-use of force, territorial integrity, and equal rights and self-determination of people, possibly complemented by the OSCE Minsk Group's Madrid principles, on which see Dietzen, 2011, *supra* n. 17.

⁵⁰ <<http://questions.assemblee-nationale.fr/q13/13-3056QG.htm>>. Italics added in both cases. Juppé made the statement in response to a question asked by an MP speaking in his own name and, significantly, in that of the Groupe d'Amitié France-Arménie, which counts no less than sixty-six members in the *Assemblée*. Given such statements and the national stakes involved in it, it is hard to see how a French ambassador with an EU mandate could be trusted with defending the EU rather than the French position, as suggested by Sammut, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 82–83.

⁵¹ Compare Cyprus' reaction to Kosovo's declaration of independence at <www.mfa.gov.cy/mfa/mfa2006.nsf/All/09C1075976DA0F32C22573E2002ED1C5?OpenDocument&print>. That Cyprus defends the same position within the Council regarding Nagorno-Karabakh was confirmed to the author in interviews.

⁵² R. Cristescu & A. Paul, 'EU and Nagorno-Karabakh: A "Better Than Nothing" Approach', *EU Observer*, 15 Mar. 2011, at <<http://euobserver.com/?aid=31989>>. Babayan's (2011, *supra* n. 1, 3)

criticisms, the EU appointed Philippe Lefort as the new EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus as of September 2011. Although the EU thus lacked a Special Representative for the South Caucasus for no more than six months, it has thrown away 'important expertise and, more importantly, contact channels into the conflict regions'.⁵³ While the decision to remove Mr Semneby is thus clearly to the detriment of the EU as a whole, it may well have been intended by certain Member States precisely with the aim of destroying his expertise and contacts.⁵⁴ The UK, for example, may have been upset at his proposal to apply the principle of 'non-recognition but engagement' to Nagorno-Karabakh because Azerbaijan, with which the UK has close economic ties, does not agree with it. France, for its part, may have feared Semneby's ambition to design a 'comprehensive EU policy for the South Caucasus'⁵⁵ – a statement that may have been read in Paris as a candidature for the co-chairmanship of the Minsk group. In rational choice institutionalist terms, then, Mr Semneby's removal presents a clear example of a principal sanctioning agent slippage.

In conclusion, the Council seems less willing than ever to make use of its exclusive power over a crucial aspect of EU policy towards Armenia, as reasons for supporting Armenia and Azerbaijan even themselves out not just between the various Member States but also within many important Member States: if widespread support for Armenia within the EU-15 may account for Armenia's relatively favourable treatment at an earlier stage, the EU's enlargement and its increased concern for energy supply now lead the Council to avoid any game-changing moves for fear of losing on either side. The price for this inaction is a lose-lose situation not only for Armenia and Azerbaijan, which continue to be at war, but also, in the long run, for the EU itself as the conflict jeopardizes the EU's aim of a secure, prosperous, and democratic neighbourhood in the South Caucasus.

proposal to replace the various member states' representatives in the OSCE Minsk Group with the heads of Delegation therefore makes no sense.

⁵³ Fischer & Lannon, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 5.

⁵⁴ Compare Sammut, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 83, and *European Voice*, 'A poor Start for Central Europe's EU Presidencies', 24 Mar. 2011.

⁵⁵ <www.consilium.europa.eu/policies/foreign-policy/eu-special-representatives/former-special-representatives/peter-semneby.aspx?lang=en>.

5 THE COMMISSION: TO BE OR NOT TO BE, THAT IS THE QUESTION

Ever since the latest EU enlargements, the Commission has been so active in the neighbourhood⁵⁶ as to generate rumours that it ‘invented’ the neighbourhood in order to make up for the loss of enlargement, considered one of the most successful Commission initiatives ever not only in terms of positive outcome for the central and eastern European countries but also in terms of institutional self-consolidation.⁵⁷ As demonstrated in the previous section, however, the Commission’s most important initiatives in the Eastern neighbourhood, ENP and EaP, have been hamstrung by the fact that foreign and security policy proper comes under the Council. Previous scholars, as stated in the introduction, have pointed out another factor that has hampered the ENP: the inconsistent application of conditionality. This section examines two recent initiatives taken by, or at least prominently involving, the Commission that have sought to tackle these two problems.

The first initiative is the Commission’s NAENP. In a joint communication dated 25 May 2011, the HR/VP and the Commission suggested that the way forward for the ENP is ‘more for more’: more funds than before will be made available to the EU’s neighbours, yet stricter conditionality will determine how much each country receives. While the EaP had already stepped up the EU’s offer to the Eastern neighbours (‘more’) in reaction to criticism regarding the lack of ENP incentives, the NAENP’s most important innovation regards the emphasis put on political conditionality (‘for more’). Fair though this principle may sound, its application can be problematic for various reasons.⁵⁸ For a start, how does one determine ‘progress in building and consolidating democracy’:⁵⁹ does one assess neighbouring countries on their relative or on their absolute levels of progress? Furthermore, even if a clear decision is taken in favour of the former, as was done for past conditional ENP funds,⁶⁰ how does one determine

⁵⁶ For example, Christensen, 2010, *supra* n. 6; Huff, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 11.

⁵⁷ Influence of enlargement policy on European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP): A. Magen, ‘The Shadow of Enlargement: Can the European Neighbourhood Policy Achieve Compliance?’, CDDRL Working Papers 68 (Stanford: Centre on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, 2008), 383–427; E. Tulmets, ‘Alter Wein in neuen Programmen: Von der Osterweiterung zur ENP’, *Osteuropa* 57 (2007): 2–3. Commission’s cultivated spill-overs in enlargement policy: J. Orbie, *Theorie van de Europese integratie: Ideeën, belangen en instellingen* (Leuven & Den Haag: Acco, 2009), 42.

⁵⁸ Arguments to abandon conditionality: Fischer & Lannon, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 4; Grant, 2011, *supra* n. 2, 10.

⁵⁹ High Representative (HR) of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy & European Commission, ‘A New Response to a Changing Neighbourhood: A Review of European Neighbourhood Policy’ (2011), 6, at <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com_11_303_en.pdf>.

⁶⁰ European Commission, ‘Principles for the Implementation of a Governance Facility under ENPI’ (2008), 8, at <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/governance_facility_en.pdf>.

the precise level of relative progress towards democratization?⁶¹ Lest they suggest that the EU be failing in its neighbourhood, Progress Reports almost invariably emphasize positive over negative evolutions. In the overall assessment of the Report for 2008, for example, post-election violence was treated in one sentence.⁶² As a result, Armenia's democratization, including recent government overtures towards the opposition, looks much better on paper than it does in practice.⁶³ It remains to be seen to what extent NAENP Progress Reports will entail a change in this respect, especially given the greater involvement of partner countries in progress assessment under the NAENP.⁶⁴ Suppose the NAENP does call problems by their names, the next question is to what extent a country such as Armenia would effectively be punished for that. Officials suggest that the Commission cannot but take sanctions against Armenia if, in the upcoming elections cycle, the 2008 post-election violence would repeat itself: the EU is too strong a normative power not to break off path dependency if its basic principles are not respected in the neighbourhood. Past experiences with conditional funds, however, suggest otherwise. The ENP Governance Facility, for example, intended to reward neighbours making the greatest progress, received but a small amount of money due to inter-institutional debates.⁶⁵ In addition, the money available for the first round was awarded more or less equally between Eastern and Southern neighbours not on the basis of merit but because of the importance attached by the Southern Member States to the Mediterranean neighbours.⁶⁶ More than with interests overriding norms and ideas, the reason EU conditionality failed lies, again, with intra- and inter-institutional competition.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Compare K. Smith, 'The Outsiders: The European Neighbourhood Policy', *International Affairs* 81, no. 4 (2005): 757–773, at 764.

⁶² European Commission, 'Progress Report Armenia: 2008' (2009), 2, at <http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/progress2009/sec09_511_en.pdf>.

⁶³ Compare Babayan, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 2–3; R. Giragosian, 'From Partisan Confrontation to Political Stalemate: The Struggle for Stability in Armenia', in ed. Hug, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 16–20; J. Hale, 'Progress towards Democracy Slows in ENP Partners Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia', *OSI Articles*, 31 May 2011, at <www.soros.org/initiatives/brussels/articles_publications>; H. Kostanyan, 'Spillovers from the Arab Revolts: Is Armenia Next in Line?', *CEPS Policy Brief* 236 (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2011); V. Shkolnikov, 'European Assistance to Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law in Armenia: Incremental Results, No Breakthrough', in ed. Hug, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 51–53.

⁶⁴ Mikhelidze, 2009, *supra* n. 2, 4.

⁶⁵ M. Emerson, G. Noutcheva & N. Popescu, 'The European Neighbourhood Policy Two Years On: Time Indeed for an "ENP Plus"', *CEPS Policy Brief* 126 (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2007), 23.

⁶⁶ R. Youngs, 'Is European Democracy Promotion on the Wane?', *CEPS Working Document* 292 (Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies, 2008), 3. For Ukraine's reaction to similar cases, cf. Grant, 2011, *supra* n. 2.

⁶⁷ Fischer & Lannon, 2011, *supra* n. 1, 6; the ENP therefore cannot be said to have substantially diminished tensions between Member States over foreign policy preferences. In fact, interest in ENP and Eastern Partnership (EaP) in general greatly fluctuates with Member State presidencies. Cf. Mikhelidze, 2009, *supra* n. 2; Albrycht, 2009, *supra* n. 42.

The second initiative to be discussed here regards the reforms introduced under the Lisbon Treaty in order to counter institutional compartmentalization, including, first and foremost, the creation of the EEAS. In theory, the EEAS is composed of 'officials from relevant departments of the General Secretariat of the Council and of the Commission as well as staff seconded from national diplomatic services of the Member States' (Article 27/3 TEU). As far as the neighbourhood is concerned, however, EEAS staff almost invariably derives from the Commission. What is more, the neighbourhood still has its own specific Commissioner, Štefan Füle.⁶⁸ One way of explaining this anomaly is that taking over all of the EU's external actions at once would have been too big a job for the newly installed HR/VP Lady Ashton. Another explanation is that the Commission uses the neighbourhood to keep an important voice in external policy after the completion of the 2004 and 2007 enlargements. That inter-institutional competition rather than collaboration may lie behind the co-existence of a HR/VP and a Commissioner is confirmed by the fact that Ashton and Füle have different visions on what the EU's policy in its neighbourhood should look like. Disagreement between them was recently so strong, in fact, as to cause repeated delays in the publication of the NAENP.⁶⁹ When the NAENP was finally launched, it brought to the surface another problem facing the HR/VP: while the joint communication on the NAENP presented the twenty-four-page result of a careful balancing act between the HR/VP and the Commission, the Council reaction to the document presented a rather different view:⁷⁰ no more than four pages long, the Council conclusions leave out many elements that neighbouring countries, backed by Füle and eventually by Ashton, deemed crucially important, such as the reference to Article 49 TEU.⁷¹ At least in this particular instance, then, the HR/VP does not seem to have derived great power from her much-praised double-hatted position:⁷² mistrusted for her HR hat by the Commission and for her VP hat by

⁶⁸ Officially, the EEAS is responsible for programming, the Commission for implementing the ENP, yet the division risks being less clear-cut on the ground given the EEAS's staff composition for the EaP countries.

⁶⁹ T. Vogel, 'Commission to Present New Neighbourhood Policy', *European Voice*, 20 May 2011, at <www.europeanvoice.com/article/2011/may/commission-to-present-new-neighbourhood-policy/71145.aspx>. The marked preference of Armenian officials and lobby groups for Füle over Ashton suggests that neighbouring countries are exploiting European institutional disagreements.

⁷⁰ Compare Art. 18/2 Treaty of European Union.

⁷¹ Council, 'Council Conclusions on the European Neighbourhood Policy' (2011), at <www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/foraff/122917.pdf>. As partner countries had lately come to appreciate the EEAS for not telling them off with the Member States as an excuse, interviews made clear that the Council's lack of enthusiasm came as a particular disappointment.

⁷² For the institutional explanation for, and risks of, this double-hatted position, see Crum, 2006, *supra* n. 9, 397.

the Council, the HR/VP risks getting squashed between these two powerful institutions. If so, she would become living proof of the devastating impact of inter-institutional competition on the ENP. If, on the other hand, the HR/VP manages to become the embodiment of an institutionalized dialogue between the Commission and the Council, her role holds much promise. It remains to be seen which way the role of the HR/VP will develop.

For many years, so we can conclude, the Commission has been administering⁷³ deficient medicines to Armenia in the sense that ENP or EaP contribution to progress towards democratization, and *a fortiori* towards prosperity or security, has been less than satisfactory. The main reason for this failure, once more, turned out to be the EU's institutional set-up: while trade-offs between Member States led to the inconsistent application of conditionality, competition between the Council and the Commission curtailed the NAENP even before its launch. Two recent initiatives have sought to tackle these problems, yet these too risk to be insufficient to cure the EU's ills: unless the newly installed HR/VP can carve out an indispensable role for herself as the embodiment of inter-institutional dialogue between the Council and the Commission, she risks being crushed by what has been shown throughout this article to be a decisive explanation for the EU's failure in its neighbourhood: the Union's institutional turf wars.

6 CONCLUSIONS

In the wake of the Jasmine revolutions, politicians and scholars have wondered why the EU has failed to create a secure, democratic, and prosperous neighbourhood. Many have accused the fact that interests have overridden ideas: the EU has preferred to do business with dictators over stimulating democratic movements. The most commonly proposed solution is therefore a reinforcement of conditionality, as exemplified by the recently proposed NAENP. Yet apart from the fact that conditionality is sometimes inefficient – as in the case of a regime as affluent as Azerbaijan's – or even counterproductive – generalized mobility restrictions are, after all, not conducive to grassroots democratization movements – past attempts in this direction have invariably failed. Before trying the same remedy again, it is therefore worthwhile to ask why it has not succeeded in the past. Likewise, investigation is in place into the reasons behind the other obstacle that has been identified to impede an efficient neighbourhood policy: the lack of integration between ENP and EaP on the one hand, and

⁷³ ENP and EaP have indeed been criticized for being administrative rather than political instruments. Cf. Schäffer & Tolksdorf, 2009, *supra* n. 5, 4; Grant, 2011, *supra* n. 2; Huff, 2010, *supra* n. 5, 39.

CFSP and ESDP on the other. This article has located the root of both problems with the EU's institutional set-up.

In the case of Armenia, it was shown how recent Commission initiatives were jeopardized by Member State trade-offs, how the HR/VP has to fight for survival amidst a Council-Commission turf war, how the Council's joint decision trap has led to a lowest common-denominator approach to the detriment of the EU and Armenia alike, and how Parliament has, in spite of its ambitions, sidelined itself by a lack of internal coherence. Taken together, these instances of intra- and inter-institutional competition allow to explain the past, understand the present, and, to some extent, predict the future of EU-Armenia relations. Armenia's relatively favourable treatment under the EU's early initiatives towards the South Caucasus, for example, can be accounted for by the support that Armenia garnered from influential Member States in the EU-12 and -15. If a joint decision trap for a long time ensured its continuation, the increased importance of energy, the accession of the central and eastern European countries, and the EU's self-presentation as a normative power now seem to be pushing in a different direction, where Armenia may have to compete with other neighbouring countries for EU support. The power of new initiatives that take into account these evolutions should not be overestimated, however: past experiences suggest that ideas (e.g., democratization) or interests (e.g., energy) have seldom been able to override path dependency. This time around, of course, an institutional reform has been added to the balance. Yet it remains to be seen whether the HR/VP will make a real difference or whether she herself will become a victim of the turf wars that she has been appointed to overcome.

At first sight, Armenia may seem a unique case as the EU's engagement with most other ENP partner countries can be accounted for by either ideas – as in the case of Georgia with its strong pro-European discourse – or interests – as in the case of Azerbaijan with its oil reserves. Closer inspection shows, however, that many other partners too have substantial communities living in Member States to lobby for them, have powerful neighbours whom many EU Member States would not wish to offend, or are involved in conflicts that divide the Council. In their case too, then, the model proposed here for the failure of the EU's policy towards Armenia may hold at least part of the clue. More generally, such institutional explanations are of course not unique to the EU's neighbourhood policy: in other domains too, the EU's policy has been shown to be determined by its institutional structure. If the institutional framework has been neglected in previous analyses of EU relations with its neighbourhood, this article has shown that it holds important lessons for the past, present, and future of neighbourhood policy too.

AIMS

The aim of the *Review* is to consider the external posture of the European Union in its relations with the rest of the world. Therefore the *Review* will focus on the political, legal and economic aspects of the Union's external relations. The *Review* will function as an interdisciplinary medium for the understanding and analysis of foreign affairs issues which are of relevance to the European Union and its Member States on the one hand and its international partners on the other. The *Review* will aim at meeting the needs of both the academic and the practitioner. In doing so the *Review* will provide a public forum for the discussion and development of European external policy interests and strategies, addressing issues from the points of view of political science and policy-making, law or economics. These issues should be discussed by authors drawn from around the world while maintaining a European focus.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The editors will consider for publication unsolicited manuscripts in English as well as commissioned articles. Authors should ensure that their contributions will be apparent also to readers outside their specific expertise. Articles may deal with general policy questions as well as with more specialized topics. Articles will be subjected to a review procedure, and manuscripts will be edited, if necessary, to improve the effectiveness of communication. It is intended to establish and maintain a high standard in order to attain international recognition.

SUBMISSION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editorial Assistant at the Editorial Office. The manuscript should be accompanied by a covering letter stating that the article has not been published, or submitted for publication, elsewhere. Authors are asked to submit two copies of their manuscript as well as a copy on computer disk. Manuscripts should be 6,000-8,000 words and be typed, double spaced and with wide margins. The title of an article should begin with a word useful in indexing and information retrieval. Short titles are invited for use as running heads. All footnotes should be numbered in sequential order, as cited in the text, and should be typed double-spaced on a separate sheet. The author should submit a short biography of him or herself.

BOOK REVIEWS

Copies of books should be sent to the Book Review Editor.

For books in English: Professor Alasdair Blair, Head of Department of Politics and Public Policy, De Montfort University, The Gateway, Leicester, LE1 9BH, UK. Email: ablair@dmu.ac.uk.

Books in other languages: Professor Sven Biscop, EGMONT, Royal Institute for International Relations (IRRI-KIIB), Rue de Namur 69, 1000 Brussels, Belgium. Email: s.biscop@egmontinstitute.be.