EU-Japan Relations

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The European Union as a Global Security Actor

Where are we today? 27 countries (with perhaps more to follow) are pooling their resources and have integrated their policies across a whole raft of areas.

This 'European Union':

- sits at the very top table of international trade negotiations;
- is a major player in terms of global development and humanitarian aid;
- is trying to set the agenda on climate change;
- has a primary interest in post-conflict reconstruction;
- and has undertaken/is undertaking military and police crisis management and conflict prevention missions in south-east Europe, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Indonesia and central Africa.

Compare this to the scenarios facing these countries in 1945.

All these activities combine to impact globally on the security of individuals, communities, states, regions etc.

So how did they get here?

Origins

Legacy of WW2 – 'never again'.

States initially preoccupied with traditional/narrow security concerns – survival, territorial integrity etc.

Subsequent first attempts at (west) European integration were in the military sphere – limited success – overtaken by events and the predominance of NATO.

What we now know as the EU was then launched in 1957 (six countries) and it was based on economic integration.

Founding Fathers – the problem was the state system – therefore move towards a federal structure …

Immediately, EU had an external profile – trade and development. But not much else.

The sense that the EU was becoming an international political actor only reluctantly, and by default – it was a reactive process.

Foreign Policy Integration

Emergence of a foreign policy culture –

Impact of external events – oil shocks, ostpolitik, CSCE …

But still constrained by the Cold War context.

End of the Cold War

Transformation of the international system – the bipolar/binary constraints removed.

European Security is no longer subsumed by the superpower stand-off – it becomes 'softer' but vastly more complicated.

European leaders muddle through and end up maintaining the institutional status quo.

Collapse of Yugoslavia

Crucial in shaping the EU as the security actor we have today.

Post-Dayton – two sets of conclusions could've been drawn –

Militarization –

Franco-British dynamic is crucial –

Kosovo - signs of institutional learning.

Twenty-First Century

Real signs that the Union was becoming far more proactive in dealing with Europe's security challenges –

- enlargement to the CEECS – export security or import insecurity;
- neighbourhood policy;
- focus on conflict prevention;
- has gone 'out-of-area',

- gradual realisation that all its external policies are interlinked. That security is just as much about combating poverty and promoting development as it is about combating international terrorism; indeed, the two are often linked.

However, post-9/11, the EU, to a large extent, went back into reactive mode –

- the US was setting the agenda and dominating the security discourse;
- reverting back to an almost Cold War/binary stance - 'war on terror', 'with us or against us';
- EU split over Iraq.

That said, the Union's Security and Defence Policy has been much more than a paper exercise – 17 missions to date (10,000 troops & 3,000 police officers).

Conclusion

Why is the Union undertaking such a panoply of security activities?

Strength in numbers is part of it … As is efficiency.

There is no mission statement setting out what the EU stands for and is willing to promote and protect –

- closest it got was the vague 2003 ESS.

The new Lisbon Treaty (if it ever gets implemented) doesn't really answer these questions/deal with these issues – but does include measures designed to make the Union more effective as an international actor.

European integration has always been a process -

Detachment of EU elites from the citizens -

Union is making itself an unparalleled 'one-stop shop' for security – no other organisation can call upon such an array of instruments – implications for OSCE & NATO?