THE EUROPEAN UNION AND PEACEBUILDING

POLICY AND LEGAL ASPECTS
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edited by

Steven Blockmans
Jan Wouters
Tom Ruys
FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

You have in your hands the last part of a trilogy exploring the European Union’s approaches to conflicts and crisis. The titles of these books present well the evolution of the international policy debate and thinking during the first decade of the 21st century from a relatively narrow pre-conflict perspective to a wider approach which encompasses all phases of the crisis. The first part published in 2004 was called ‘The European Union and Conflict prevention’, reflecting how conflict prevention was high on the agenda as a response to the Balkan Wars. In 2008 the second part, ‘The European Union and Crisis Management’, was published as the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP)-missions had been operational for some years. Finally the series is completed in 2010 with “The European Union and Peacebuilding”.

Peacebuilding is a somewhat flexible concept, of which there is currently no officially agreed international definition. However, this descriptive phrase is perhaps most useful in its most comprehensive sense – efforts aiming at a solid and lasting peace. For the European Union, peacebuilding requires bringing together a variety of external policy tools which include security aspects, mediation and preventive diplomacy, development cooperation and trade relations, in order to make an impact, be coherent and achieve sustainable results.

The European Union has made systematic efforts to ensure an integrated approach to peacebuilding. In this regard, the decisions adopted on the security and development nexus and on fragility in 2007 were a strategic step forward. We are engaged in various activities across the globe, such as for example supporting conflict resolution processes and ensuring the engagement of women in these, as well as building the peacebuilding capacities of regional organisations.

Successful peacebuilding requires taking on a preventive focus. Conflict prevention continues to lie at the heart of all European Union activities, as it is the most cost effective and life saving approach. Conflict prevention implies providing early and sustainable assistance to countries under stress and it is the best measure to avoid a relapse into conflict. While building for the future, we must strive to put an end to the suffering caused by legacies of conflicts, such as the scourge of landmines and other inhumane weapons, which continue to create a burden even decades later and delay development and prosperity goals.

Moreover, peacebuilding is also a joint effort in which the international community needs to work together. In this regard the United Nations, international and regional organisations and especially civil society are all vital partners for the European Union. However, international efforts need to involve local communities early on in order to create a nationally owned process, which is a requisite for lasting
peace. Only through partnership with local actors can international norms be combined with a respect and understanding of local context, and promote the transfer of responsibilities and ownership to the populations concerned. In this work we need to engage with local civil society as well as representatives of media and local business communities.

The link between peace, security and development has been widely recognised by the international community, and as a response, the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was created in 2005. The European Union is committed to actively supporting the work of the Peacebuilding Commission on the basis of its experience, resources and worldwide operability.

During the first five years the PBC has brought together all key players on the ground to enable a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding in selected post-conflict states. In 2010 the progress of the PBC so far will be examined in order to take on board lessons learned for the next steps, ensuring that it can discharge its mandate more effectively and better deliver real progress on the ground. 2010 is also the year for the Review Summit of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) aiming at eradicating poverty. The link between countries affected by fragility and conflict and those lagging most behind in attaining the MDGs indicates clearly the need for stronger ties between security and development efforts.

I congratulate the authors of this informative and well-written book, who are not afraid of taking a critical approach. From the point of view of the EU institutions, it is published at a particularly timely moment, as we embark upon a new era in the European Union’s external relations through the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. I hope that you as a reader will find enriching this thorough and wide ranging description of the various aspects of peacebuilding, a concept that we will undoubtedly keep on discussing in the coming years and a goal at which we will continue to aim.

March 2010

Catherine ASHTON

*High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission*
PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present volume constitutes the last part of a triptych, with earlier works dealing with conflict prevention (V. Kronenberger and J. Wouters, eds., *The European Union and Conflict Prevention: Policy and Legal Aspects* (The Hague, T.M.C. Asser Press 2004)) and crisis management respectively (S. Blockmans, ed., *The European Union and Crisis Management: Policy and Legal Aspects* (The Hague, T.M.C. Asser Press 2008)). The obvious implication is that we aim at focusing on the final phase of peacemaking efforts to break conflict cycles, on *The European Union and Peacebuilding*.

Leading practitioners and prominent academics have been invited to explore the wide variety of policy and legal aspects of the European Union’s contribution to building durable peace in countries ravaged by violent conflict. The book is testimony to the enormous complexity of international efforts to break conflict cycles, which requires both long-term commitment and a multi-faceted approach, combining the re-establishment of basic security with the promotion of respect for human rights, the rule of law, good governance and economic recovery.

Given the intricacies and dynamics of the editorial process, some of the contributions were completed prior to the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Where appropriate, these contributions nonetheless refer to the impact expected from the new Treaty. Other chapters have integrated the institutional developments since the Lisbon Treaty became operational. In any event, the editors are convinced that this divergence does not detract from the value of the analyses, nor from the lessons drawn from years of inter-institutional practice and which should be taken to heart to make the Union’s efforts in the field of peacebuilding more efficient and more effective.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the practitioners and academics who contributed to this volume. Thanks to their unique insights and high quality contributions, the book offers the first comprehensive and in-depth treatise of the role of the EU in the international peacebuilding endeavour. Special thanks also go to the T.M.C. Asser Instituut for financially supporting the production of this book, to Suzanne Habraken for her sub-editing and language-editing of the manuscript and to Steffen van der Velde for compiling the index and the list of abbreviations. This volume is the result of a fruitful cooperation between the Centre for the Law of EU External Relations (CLEER) and the Leuven Centre for Global Governance Studies.

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THE EDITORS
SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Foreword by Catherine Ashton V
Preface and Acknowledgements VII
Table of Contents XI
List of Abbreviations XIX

Making peace last. The EU’s contribution to peacebuilding 1
Steven Blockmans, Jan Wouters and Tom Ruys

Part I. EU Peacebuilding – general perspectives

Chapter 1 EU Peacebuilding: Concepts, players and instruments 15
Simon Duke and Aurélie Courtier

Chapter 2 The EU as a peacebuilder: Actorness, potential and limits 55
Nathalie Tocci

Chapter 3 EU enlargement as a peacebuilding tool 77
Steven Blockmans

Part II. Working with partners

Chapter 4 EU-UN cooperation in peacebuilding: Natural partners? 107
Catriona Gourlay

Chapter 5 The EU and the UN Peacebuilding Commission: A short account of how the EU presence has influenced the newest UN body 141
Stefano Tomat and Cesare Onestini

Chapter 6 Cooperation between the EU and the AU in the field of peacebuilding 161
Koen Vervaeye

Chapter 7 Convergence without cooperation? The EU and the OSCE in the field of peacebuilding 175
David Galbreath

Part III. Peace and security

Chapter 8 The European Union and security sector governance 195
David Spence

Chapter 9 Strengthening security, building peace: The EU in the Democratic Republic of Congo 221
Marta Martinelli
Chapter 10
The European Union and peacebuilding: The case of Chad
Cees Wittebrood and Christophe Gadrey
249

Chapter 11
EU peacebuilding in Georgia: Limits and achievements
Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaité
269

Chapter 12
The EU in Afghanistan: Peacebuilding in a conflict setting
Eva Gross
295

Part IV. Rule of law, democracy and human rights

Chapter 13
The European Union and electoral support
Patrick Dupont, Francesco Torcoli and Fabio Bargiacchi
313

Chapter 14
Mainstreaming human rights and gender into the Common Security and Defence Policy: The case of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia
Hadewych Hazelzet
341

Chapter 15
EULEX Kosovo: Walking a thin line, aiming for the rule of law
Stephan Keukeleire and Robin Thiers
353

Chapter 16
The Aceh Monitoring Mission: Securing peace and democracy
Justin Davies
375

Chapter 17
The European Union and transitional justice
Thomas Unger
387

Part V. Good governance and economic development

Chapter 18
International trusteeship and democratic peacebuilding: The EU in the Balkans
Tonny Brems Knudsen and Christian Axboe Nielsen
407

Chapter 19
A missed opportunity: State building in Bosnia and Herzegovina (October 2002 to October 2006)
Michael Humphreys and Jasna Jelisić
439

Chapter 20
Meeting the challenge of state building: EU development policy and cooperation in post-conflict countries
Philippe Darmuzey
461

Chapter 21
The EU and the Kimberley Process: A new international actor for new international relations
Stéphane Chardon
475

List of Contributors
495

Index
499
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Foreword** by Catherine Ashton V  
**Preface and Acknowledgements** VII  
**Summary of Contents** IX  
**List of Abbreviations** XIX

**Making peace last. The EU’s contribution to peacebuilding** 1  
Steven Blockmans, Jan Wouters and Tom Ruys  

1. Introduction to the book 1  
2. Scope and objective 4  
3. Overview 5

**Part I. EU Peacebuilding – general perspective**

## Chapter 1  
**EU Peacebuilding: Concepts, players and instruments** 15  
Simon Duke and Aurélie Courtier  

1. Introduction 15  
2. Concepts and definitions 16  
2.1 Introduction 16  
2.2 The UN’s understanding of peacebuilding 18  
2.3 The EU’s understanding of peacebuilding 21  
2.3.1 Introduction 21  
2.3.2 Internal and external, shorter and longer-term peacebuilding 26  
2.3.3 Short-term dimension of EU peacebuilding (CFSP and ESDP) 27  
2.3.4 Longer-term dimension of EU peacebuilding (EC) 28  
3. Competence and role distribution: policies, instruments, players 30  
3.1 Introduction 30  
3.2 Peacebuilding activities under the Community Pillar 31  
3.2.1 Policies 32  
3.2.2 Instruments 37  
3.2.3 Players 40  
3.3 Peacebuilding activities under the Second Pillar 42  
3.3.1 Policies 44  
3.3.2 Instruments 45  
3.3.3 Players 47  
3.4 Peacebuilding and the Lisbon Treaty 48  
4. The EU’s external partners in peacebuilding 49  
5. Conclusions 52

## Chapter 2  
**The EU as a peacemaker: Actorness, potential and limits** 55  
Nathalie Toacci  

1. Short and long-term policy instruments to promote peacebuilding 56  
2. EU mechanisms to promote peacebuilding 60  
2.1 Enhancing capability 61
## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Socialisation</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Conditionality</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Passive enforcement</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The EU as a peacebuilder: Potential and limits</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>The value of the benefit</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>The credibility of the EU as a peacebuilder</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 3

**EU enlargement as a peacebuilding tool**

Steven Blockmans

1. Building peace across the continent | 77    |
2. (Member) State building, epitome of (EU) peacebuilding | 78    |
3. Legal reform | 81    |
3.1 Peace brokering and constitution-making | 81    |
3.2 Constitutional reform | 82    |
3.3 Approximation of laws to the acquis | 83    |
3.3.1 More than just legal harmonisation | 83    |
3.3.2 Planning documents and institutional mechanisms | 83    |
3.3.3 Technical and financial assistance | 85    |
4. Institution building | 87    |
4.1 Creation and reorganisation | 87    |
4.1.1 Reforming the bureaucracy | 87    |
4.1.2 Coordination within the executive | 88    |
4.1.3 Security sector reform | 90    |
4.2 Democratic legitimacy? | 91    |
5. Constituency building | 94    |
5.1 Introduction | 94    |
5.2 Assuring minority rights protection | 97    |
5.3 Reinterpreting ICTY conditionality | 98    |
5.4 Fighting organised crime | 99    |
6. The future of enlargement: Peacebuilding by default rather than design? | 100   |

### Part II. Working with partners

**EU-UN cooperation in peacebuilding: Natural partners?**

Catriona Gourlay

1. Introduction | 107   |
2. Are EU and UN peacebuilding policies coherent? | 108   |
3. Operational cooperation in peacebuilding: The development dimension | 113   |
3.1 Trends in EC policy and funding for state building in fragile states | 113   |
3.2 Operational challenges for EC engagement in fragile states | 115   |
3.3 Trends in EC funding for the UN | 116   |
3.4 Analysis of funding trends | 123   |
4. Operational cooperation in peacebuilding: The (civilian) security dimension | 126   |
4.1 Trends in European civilian deployments | 127   |
4.2 Civilian ESDP-UN operational cooperation | 129   |
4.2.1 Operational trends | 129   |
4.2.2 Operational cooperation in the DRC and the EU Police Mission (EUPOL Kinshasa) | 131   |
4.2.3 Operational cooperation in the DRC and the EU security sector reform mission (EUSEC RDC) | 132   |
4.2.4 Operational cooperation in Kosovo | 136   |
5. Conclusions | 138   |
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Part III. Peace and security

### Chapter 8

**The European Union and security sector governance**  
David Spence  

1. Introduction: Discovering the concept of SSR  
2. Issues of security in international context  
3. Two concepts of SSR: Armed services-specific and holistic-societal  
   3.1 Reforming the armed services  
   3.2 A holistic-societal approach to SSR  
4. The origins and precepts of the EU’s holistic approach to security sector reform  
5. Human security  
6. The evolution of the EU policy framework for SSR  
7. Learning on the job: Cross-Pillar approaches to SSR  
8. The Commission’s external assistance instruments in support of SSR  
9. The Commission’s international role: donorship and coordination  
10. Conclusion: SSR and the EU’s normative role

### Chapter 9

**Strengthening security, building peace: The EU in the Democratic Republic of Congo**  
Marta Martinelli  

1. Introduction  
2. Background to the security situation in the DRC  
   2.1 The security context today  
   2.2 Security providers?  
3. The role of the EU in promoting stability in the DRC  
   3.1 Military intervention: from Artemis to EUFOR RD Congo  
4. The EU and security sector reform in the DRC  
   4.1 A country-specific approach  
   4.2 EUPOL Kinshasa  
   4.3 EUPOL RD Congo  
   4.4 EUSEC RD Congo  
5. The contribution of ESDP to peace and stability in the DRC: Some preliminary reflections  
   5.1 Strengths  
   5.2 Weaknesses  
6. Conclusion: Promoting peacebuilding through SSR

### Chapter 10

**The European Union and peacebuilding: The case of Chad**  
Cees Wittebrood and Christophe Gadrey  

1. Introduction  
2. Regional context  
3. EU response  
   3.1 Security support  
   3.2 Political engagement  
   3.3 Humanitarian assistance  
   3.4 Development cooperation  
4. Lessons learned  
   4.1 Has the EU approach really been comprehensive?  
   4.2 What about complementarity?  
   4.3 Has EUFOR been an appropriate and effective tool?  
   4.4 Has coordination been adequate?  
5. Conclusion
Chapter 11  
**EU peacebuilding in Georgia: Limits and achievements**  
Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaitė  
1. Introduction  
2. Two decades of conflicts and tensions in Georgia  
3. EU peace activities in Georgia: From hands-off to hands-on engagement  
4. Building peace through political dialogue  
5. The peacebuilder: The European Commission in Georgia (including Abkhazia and South Ossetia)  
6. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus: Security sector reform and confidence building  
7. EUIJUST THEMIS: Building peace through reinforcing the rule of law?  
8. The EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia  
9. The Geneva talks  
10. Conclusion  

Chapter 12  
**The EU in Afghanistan: Peacebuilding in a conflict setting**  
Eva Gross  
1. Introduction  
2. Contextualising EU engagement in Afghanistan  
2.1 The international post-conflict reconstruction framework  
2.2 Local starting points, Afghan realities  
3. The EU in Afghanistan  
3.1 Activities since 2001: An overview of the broader EU presence  
3.2 Europeanising EU efforts: Development, governance and the rule of law  
3.2.1 Health and rural development  
3.2.2 Governance and the rule of law  
4. Peacebuilding along the security-development nexus: Strategic and implementation challenges  
5. Conclusion  

Part IV. **Rule of law, democracy and human rights**  

Chapter 13  
**The European Union and electoral support**  
Patrick Dupont, Francesco Torcoli and Fabio Bargiacchi  
1. Introduction  
2. Election assistance and election observation  
3. EU election observation and assistance  
4. EU electoral assistance  
5. EC-UNDP partnership in election assistance  
6. EU election observation  
7. Composition of EU Election Observation Missions  
8. Towards an integrated strategy  
9. Historical perspective – learning by doing  
10. International and legal framework: Standards and good practices  
11. The conceptual framework: A cyclical approach towards elections  
12. Election observation and assistance – complementary activities  
13. The strategic framework (1): Whether to engage?  
14. The strategic framework (2): Where to engage?  
15. The strategic framework (3): How to engage?  
16. Further orientations
Chapter 14
Mainstreaming human rights and gender into the Common Security and Defence Policy: The case of the EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia
Hadjewych HAZELZET

1. Introduction 341
2. Mainstreaming human rights and gender into ESDP 341
3. Case study: EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) Georgia 345
4. Conclusion and way forward 347

Chapter 15
EULEX Kosovo: Walking a thin line, aiming for the rule of law
Stephan KEUKELAERE and Robin THIERS

1. Introduction 353
2. Setting the stage: The UN’s peacebuilding efforts in a post-conflict society 355
3. The bumpy road from UN(MIK) to EU(LEX) 358
5. Police and customs: The easy job? 364
6. EULEX justice – or what it all comes down to in the end 367
7. Conclusions 373

Chapter 16
The Aceh Monitoring Mission: Securing peace and democracy
Justin DAVIES

1. Introduction 375
2. AMM in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding 376
3. Mandate of AMM and immediate challenges 378
4. Organisational elements 380
5. Proactive monitoring – rule of law, human rights and democracy 381
6. Conclusion and the future 385

Chapter 17
The European Union and transitional justice
Thomas UNGER

1. Introduction 387
2. Defining transitional justice 388
3. The link between transitional justice and peacebuilding 391
4. The relevance of transitional justice for the EU 393
5. Current EU policy and practice on transitional justice 394
5.1 General overview 394
5.2 The Council (the ‘voice of Member States’) 395
5.3 Commission (the ‘driving force of the EU’) 398
5.4 The Parliament (the ‘democratic voice of the people’) 400
6. Possible future directions for the EU on transitional justice 401
7. Conclusions 403

Part V. Good governance and economic development

Chapter 18
International trusteeship and democratic peacebuilding: The EU in the Balkans
Tonny BREMS KNUDSEN and Christian AXBOE NIELSEN

1. Introduction 407
2. International trusteeship: The concept and the challenge 409
# Table of Contents

2.1 Conceptual clarification 409
2.2 The problems of contemporary trusteeship arrangements 413
3.1 The democratic challenge: The long shadow of Dayton 418
3.2 The constitutional challenge: From entities to statehood? 423
4.1 The democratic challenge: The long shadow of Resolution 1244 428
4.2 The constitutional challenge: From postponement to contested independence 430
5. The EU solution: From Dayton and Kumanovo to Brussels? 435

Chapter 19

**A missed opportunity: State building in Bosnia and Herzegovina (October 2002 to October 2006)** 439

Michael Humphreys and Jasna Jelisic

1. Introduction 439
2. Background 440
2.1 The Dayton Peace Agreement and its aftermath 440
2.2 The function of external actors in Bosnia 444
2.3 The role of the European Union 445
2.4 Immediate situation pre- and post-elections 446
3. A window of opportunity – 2003 to 2005 446
3.1 Formation of the new government 446
3.2 OHR reform programme 448
3.2.1 Defence reform 448
3.2.2 Tax reform 449
3.2.3 Police reform 450
3.3 EU integration process of BiH 452
3.4 Constitutional reform 452
4. Reflections 454
4.1 Turning points 454
4.2 Interinstitutional coherence 454
4.3 Lessons learned – what opens opportunities? 455
4.4 What froze the state building? 457
4.5 The future 459

Chapter 20

**Meeting the challenge of state building: EU development policy and cooperation in post-conflict countries** 461

Philippe Darmuzey

1. Introduction 461
2. The rationale for intervention in post-conflict countries 462
2.1 European Consensus on Development 462
2.2 Overview of key objectives 462
2.3 Situations of fragility 463
3. Instruments 465
3.1 Trends in Commission funding between 2001 and 2008 465
3.2 European Development Fund 466
3.3 Instrument for Stability 468
3.4 African Peace Facility 468
4. Challenges and ways forward 469
4.1 Introduction 469
4.2 Towards a ‘Whole-of-the-Union’ approach 470
4.3 The state-building challenge 470
4.4 Rendering EU development assistance more effective and responsive 471
4.5 Strategic partnerships 472
5. Conclusion 474
Chapter 21
The EU and the Kimberley Process: A new international actor for new international relations

Stéphane CHARDON

1. Introduction
2. The Kimberley process: An innovative international instrument
   2.1 The legal status of the Kimberley Process: An international scheme based on national laws
   2.2 The KP’s innovative organisational set-up: Flexibility and burden sharing
   2.2.1 The Chair
   2.2.2 Working groups
   2.3 Tripartite composition and consensual decision-making
3. From Kimberley to Windhoek – the maturity of the KP (2003-2009)
   3.1 KP ‘inclusiveness’ – an attractive club
   3.2 KP statistics – transparency in the diamond sector
   3.3 Monitoring KP implementation – the KP’s ‘investigative arm’?
   3.4 From conflict prevention towards peacebuilding
4. The KP’s operations in crises
   4.1 Côte d’Ivoire: UN and KP united in the fight against conflict diamonds
   4.2 Marange diamonds: ‘Blood diamonds’ or ‘conflict diamonds’?
5. Challenges to the KP’s future
   5.1 Too narrow a mandate?
   5.2 Strong international rules v. weak national implementation
   5.3 Adaptation and evolution
   5.4 A Kimberley Process for all ‘conflict resources’?
6. Conclusion – a new instrument for a new century

List of Contributors

Index
4. Political parties at European level contribute to forming European political awareness and to expressing the will of citizens of the Union... - Article 10 of the Treaty on European Union. Legitimation of the European Union rests on the Treaty System. The body is responsible for drafting all law of the European Union and has a monopoly over legislative initiative. It also deals with the day-to-day running of the Union and has a duty to uphold the law and treaties (in this role it is known as the "Guardian of the Treaties").[13]. The Commission is led by a President who is nominated by the Council (in practice the European Council) and approved by Parliament.

Policy and Legal Aspects. Editors: Blockmans, Steven, Wouters, Jan, Ruys, Tom (Eds.) Buy this book. Like conflict prevention and crisis management, ‘peacebuilding’ forms an integral part of the European Union’s external policy efforts to break the cycle of conflict, insecurity and poverty. A concept developed in the context of the United Nations, the EU’s Lisbon Treaty mentions ‘post-conflict stabilisation’ among the tasks which the EU is set to perform in the implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy. The European Union’s main objective is to promote peace, follow the EU’s values and improve the wellbeing of nations. The European Parliament and other institutions see to it that these objectives are achieved. The main objectives are: A common European area without borders. The objective is to create a free and safe Europe with no internal borders. The citizens living in the area enjoy the rights granted by the European Union. Internal market. With the common foreign policy, the European Union wants to make sure that the resources of the planet are used sensibly and that the environment is not destroyed. The European Union also wishes to respect other countries and nations. It works for free and fair trade and tries to eliminate poverty. Human rights are important all over the world. The role played by the European Union (EU) in the global geopolitics is indisputable. This organization, which is the center of integration processes in Europe the developed world for several decades shows that has serious international impact. Since the end of XX century (especially after the Lisbon summit), the EU has opted for a course to become one of the major geopolitical centers of gravity. Processes in the organization began to manifest themselves after that. Therefore there is a need to analyze these contradictory processes. First, we note that the EU in the geopolitical aspect is v