

**Whitman, Richard, and Stefan Wolff, eds. 2012. *The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager*. New York: Routledge, 254 pp., £29.00**

From the beginning of the 1990s we could observe EU's increased interest in performing an active role in the field of conflict management. The European Security and Defence Policy was launched in 1999 and became fully operational in 2002. After a decade of operation "The European Union as a Global Conflict Manager" is a timely presentation that sums up EU's accomplishments and shortfalls in conflict management. Moreover, the position fills the gap in the literature on EU as an international security actor, and for the first time, in comprehensive and detailed way, presents EU capabilities in the field of civilian and military operations.

The first part of the book outlines the background information necessary for understanding the EU conflict management policy, such as the institutional architecture of EU and the transformation of the Common Security and Defence Policy. It allows the reader to identify institutional shortfalls that EU faces in the process of planning and conducting its conflict management operations. This is crucial for understanding the analysis presented in the part of the book that follows; however, this chapter could have offered a more detailed explanation of complicated relations between the European Commission, Council of the European Union and 27 member states in the decision-making process, especially for readers who are not acquainted with the structure and functioning of the EU.

The second part of the book examines case studies of chosen EU civil and military missions, including Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, the Israel/Palestine, Georgia, Macedonia, Moldova and the Sub-Saharan Africa. In the introduction to the volume Richard G. Whitman and Stefan Wolff, the editors, developed a framework that has been applied in the analysis to all the above mentioned cases, making it easy for the reader to examine the EU performance and to identify its successes as well as its shortfalls. Each author takes into consideration internal and external factors that influence EU effectiveness. The internal factor include the capability to act, capability to fund and capability to cooperate and coordinate. The crucial external factor is the context of the conflict that can be analyzed on the local, state, regional and global levels.

The third part of the book provides a summary of the EU performance in civilian crisis management by Nicoletta Pirozzi, and an overview of EU performance in military crisis management authored by Annemarie Peen Rodt. The latter author develops a very

\* *n.a.piotrowska@gmail.com*

interesting framework that can, generally, be applied in the analysis of international civil and military operations.

The author underlined that in order to evaluate the EU's performance in conflict management it is necessary to define success. Consequently, she divided success into internal, EU-specific success (*which evaluates whether the operation achieved its purpose for the EU*) and external, conflict-specific success (*which tests whether the operation had managed the violent aspect of the conflict*). Bearing this in mind, the reader can see that EU generally had no problems achieving the goals set up in Brussels; however, in most of the cases the impact of the organization on the actual conflict was limited due to the narrow mandate of operations. Therefore, EU achieved conflict-specific success just partially, especially if we take into consideration the long-term perspective.

The same author stated that the European Union as a global conflict manager did more good than harm. The same idea is indirectly presented in most of the case studies included in the book. Despite the fact that authors identified many shortfalls in EU activities, they had a tendency in their conclusions to present EU as a fairly successful conflict manager. I believe that doing less harm than good is not a measure of success, and it definitely should not be. In this regard, the book lacked coherent and well structured criticism of the performance of the EU as a global conflict manager.

There is one more important finding in the book that deserves to be highlighted. Annemarie Peen Rodt and Stefan Wolff pointed out that literature on CSDP generally overlooks or underestimates the role of individuals in the process of conflict management. To fill in that gap, the authors showed the importance of individual Special Representatives and heads of states and governments during the EU's civilian and military operations.

In the conclusion, the authors did a good job of summarizing the last two decades of EU conflict management, pointing out the main pre-Lisbon Treaty problems that the EU faced in this field and drawing perspectives for the future. Richard G. Whitman and Stefan Wolff identified the two main reasons that have prevented the European Union from becoming an effective global conflict manager and, on this basis, developed guidelines for the future EU strategy in conflict management. The strategy should be a mandatory position for politicians responsible for EU's policy in this field.

Without a doubt, the book represents a timely contribution to the discussions on EU Security and Defence Policy and, more specifically, on its ability to become a globally recognized conflict manager. It summarizes the pre-Lisbon Treaty developments in this field and shows that if the EU learns a lesson from its previous experiences, it has the potential to become a successful global conflict manager in the future.

**Natalia Piotrowska** is a postgraduate student at the University of Wrocław.