

UACES Scholarship 2010

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Outline of project

The aim of my research project is to investigate the important conditions under which the EU and the UN cooperate effectively in the realm of international peace and security. Drawing upon Putnam's two-level game metaphor, this study examines a new revised two-level game as an analytical framework in which a complex web of EU actors interacts simultaneously at two different levels, international UN level and domestic EU level. By doing so, this study identifies the most important EU actors involved in decision-making on the issue of peacekeeping operations. Variables which may influence the likelihood of EU involvement in particularly military operation alongside the UN are examined through the case studies of Tchad/CAR and Congo. Two most competing IR theories, neo-realism vs. social constructivism, provide a useful explanation for motivations of EU-UN cooperation in peacekeeping operations. Finally, this paper concludes with internal and external challenges of the EU in relations with the UN in international peacekeeping.

Academic achievements

My field trip was carried out in two different venues in Europe, Paris and Brussels. Since my project focused on simultaneous interactions between the UN and the EU on the issue of international peacekeeping, this research trip to Europe was very essential to examine the negotiation phase on the EU side and to identify the most important EU actors involved in decision-making.

During my stay in Paris, I visited the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defence and conducted a number of interviews with officials working for the European foreign and security policy. I also visited European Institute for Security Studies and met with experts on the issues of European cooperation in international peace and security. I gathered important empirical evidences for effective peacekeeping negotiations at the EU level.

My field trip in Brussels was very productive theoretically as well as empirically. I presented my paper at GARNET conference which provided me so good opportunity to broaden my personal network, and it enabled me to get most valuable feedback from both scholars and experts. Thereafter, I concentrated on interviews at the Council of the EU, the European Commission, and NATO headquarters in Brussels. I carried out in-depth and semi-structured interviews further focusing on specific issues on the peacekeeping cases and ESDP decision-making at political level. The series of interviews allowed me to acquire knowledge of the practical role of EU actors in decision-making and also provided me with the chance to access the substantial primary document and archive which I had not been able to gain through public document.

Positive and negative aspects

Overall my research trip in Europe was extremely productive and invaluable for my PhD project. It allowed me to collect confidential and practical information which had hardly been disclosed in public. Thanks to this great opportunity, I was able to make my PhD project further robust and fruitful indeed.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to UACES and the European Commission for providing generous support which was extremely helpful for my research project.