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International roles of the European Union

The subject of the international roles played by the participants in international relations is not frequently researched academically. Fundamental theoretical studies in the field of international relations refer to the sociological theory of roles. Theories of international roles have been examined in global academia among others by Kalevi Holsti, James Rosenau, Stephen Walker, and Lisbeth Aggestam. In Poland, studies in this field were pioneered by Józef Kukułka and Ziemowit Jacek Pietraś and their disciples¹. As concerns the international roles of the European Union, Justyna Zajac² has conducted the most significant research.

In general, the notion of an international role signifies an organized and purposeful system of interactions exerted by one participant (actor) in their international relations with others. That system is a product of this participant's subjective assessment and the influence of the environment. Each actor typically plays several international roles, and referring to a single role is synonymous with defining its international position. The theory of international roles divides the roles played by participants according to the type of relations where they are manifested. Clive Archer distinguishes three basic types of roles played by international organizations: a) the role of an instrument of foreign policy of each member state used for the purpose of solving matters that are significant for this state; b) the role of an arena or forum where states conduct consultations, agree on common interests, or conclude agreements; c) the role of a sovereign actor in international relations³.

Since the European Union is an independent international actor, this paper focuses primarily on the last type of international role. International organizations acting in the capacity of actors on the international stage can play international political, military, economic, humanitarian, cultural, and other roles. When the criteria of intensity and dynamics are considered, the EU's international roles can be hierarchized as follows: economic roles, political and security roles, and a cultural-and-civilizational role.

¹ Cf.: K. Holsti, *National Role Conception in the Study of Foreign Policy*, "International Studies Quarterly" 1970, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 233–309; J. N. Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics. A Theory of Change and Continuity*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey 1990; *Role Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis*, ed. S. G. Walker, Duke University Press, Durham 1987; L. Aggestam, *Role Conceptions and the Politic of Identity in Foreign Policy*, ARENA Working Papers WP 99/8, University of Oslo, Oslo 1999; J. Kukułka, R. Zięba, *Ewolucja roli międzynarodowej Polski Odrodzonej*, "Studia Nauk Politycznych" 1981, No. 4, p. 77–81; Z. J. Pietraś, *Pojęcie i klasyfikacja ról międzynarodowych*, UMCS, Lublin 1989, p. 10–11.

² J. Zajac, *Role Unii Europejskiej w regionie Afryki Północnej i Bliskiego Wschodu*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2010.

³ C. Archer, *International Organizations*, Routledge, London 1993, p. 134–148.

1. International economic roles

In the course of consistently implemented economic integration within the frameworks of the European Community, in the late 20th century the European Union came to the forefront of the most significant participants in international economic relations. The Union plays four distinct international roles in this realm, namely that of a leader of sustainable development and a model of successful and comprehensive integration, the largest shareholder in global trade, provider of the largest development assistance, and donor of the largest humanitarian aid.

1.1. The role of the leader of sustainable development and the model of successful and comprehensive integration

The policy of building a customs union and common market in various economic sectors conducted by the European Economic Community (EEC) resulted in accelerated economic growth and gradual forming of a uniform, enormous common market. On July 1, 1990, the first package of resolutions to establish Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) came into force, to be followed by the second part implemented as of January 1, 1994. The beginning of 1999 marked the adoption of a common currency – the euro – as an instrument for non-cash transactions, while at the beginning of 2002 the euro became a common currency for twelve EU member countries⁴. Economic and Monetary Union became the main component of the first pillar of the EU. The European Community (renamed the EEC) conducted external economic policies, contributing in this way to the reinforcement of the common market that emerged as a result of “internal” integration, and perceived as “fortress Europe”, in particular by the onlookers from outside the EU. The economic and social organism of the contemporary EU, made up of 27 states, encompasses a territory of 4,242,000 km², and a population of 495 millions, constituting the largest market in the world (8.8% of the global population).

Advancing economic integration resulted in the European Community reinforcing its international position measured with macroeconomic development indicators. According to data from the International Monetary Fund, over the period of 1993–2012, the EU’s gross domestic product (measured in terms of purchasing power parity, PPP) increased from USD 7.7 bn to nearly USD 16.1 bn, meaning a growth of approx. 109%. This can be compared with the same indicator for the United States, which went from USD 6.7 bn to USD 15.6 (an increase of 141%), or China where it grew from USD 1.4 bn to USD 12.4 bn (an increase of 907%). The results obtained from the beginning gave the EU the leading position in global output, which amounted to 26% in 1993 and to 19.4% in 2012⁵.

⁴ Then Greece joined the eurozone on January 1, 2001 (adopting the euro in cash transactions a year later), Slovenia on January 1, 2007, Cyprus and Malta on January 1, 2008, Slovakia on January 1, 2009 and Estonia on January 1, 2011. The United Kingdom, Sweden and Denmark as well most of new EU members have not adopted the euro as a common currency.

⁵ It has to be noted that the entire West was impacted by the financial crisis of 2008, which decelerated growth resulting in a decreased percentage share in global GDP for the EU. In 2008, this share

It needs to be noted that the economic development of EU countries is not rapid (on average it amounted to 2.6% annually from 1993–2012) but is uniform in different sectors. It also involves the integration of numerous countries into a single economic organism, where some regions are relatively backward when compared to the most advanced Benelux countries or Austria, Sweden and Finland, which joined the EU in 1995.

One of the fundamental factors allowing for stable economic growth in the EU to be maintained is huge government spending on research and development, amounting to 0.73–0.9% of GDP in the period of 1991–2000. After the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy, which announced a further increase of outlays on research and development up to 3% of GDP, this expenditure did not increase considerably. From 2000–2006 the available means for research and development went up in seventeen EU countries, mainly those with the most serious arrears in this field. However, the remaining ten countries cut their outlays for science, therefore the total budget for this purpose has not changed since 2005, amounting to 1.84% of GDP, which is significantly less than in the United States (2.6% of GDP), Japan and South Korea (approx. 3%).

The European Union runs a policy of sustainable growth making use of market instruments, and it ensures that this policy provides for social protection (which is termed as a social market economy). That is why the EU allocates considerable funds to social protection. According to the data of the EU Statistical Office (Eurostat), in 2007 the average for the entire EU-27 stood at 27.3% of GDP. In terms of the percentage of GDP allocated to social matters, Sweden comes first with an indicator of 32.9%. The leaders also include France, Denmark, Germany, Belgium and Austria, where the indicator exceeds 29% in each state. The Baltic states are at the opposite extreme with Latvia's 12.6% slightly ahead of Lithuania and Estonia. Poland finds itself in the middle of the ranking with expenditure at a level of 20% of GDP.

The advantageous results of integration within the European Community made the European Union, established in 1993, a model of comprehensive integration for other states and regions in the world⁶. Since the early 1960s, other countries have applied to join the European Community, which resulted in several stages of enlargement of the Community: in 1973 Great Britain, Ireland and Denmark joined, followed by Greece in 1981, Spain and Portugal in 1986, Austria, Sweden and Finland in 1995, and as many as ten further countries in 2004: Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Cyprus and Malta, and eventually Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. An accession treaty has already been signed by Croatia which is to become an EU member on July 1, 2013. Turkey has been running difficult accession ne-

amounted to 22%, only to decrease afterwards. China's share in global GDP increased to nearly 15% in 2012.

⁶ It should be borne in mind, however, that in its external economic relations the EU demands its partners and recipients of development assistance to accept EU norms and standards as regards, among other things, protection of the environment and respecting human rights. Cf.: A. Ward, *Frameworks for Cooperation between the European Union and Third States: a Viable Matrix for Uniform Human Rights Standards*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 1998, Vol. 3, No. 4, p. 505–536; M. Cremona, *The European Union as an International Actor: The Issues of Flexibility and Linkage*, ibidem 1998, Vol. 3, No. 1, p. 81.

negotiations, while further countries (in the Western Balkans) are seeking to start their negotiations. The advancements in European integration set a good example to be followed by other regions, e.g. in the Western hemisphere where integration groups emerged, some open to cooperation with the EU (MERCOSUR, Andean Community), and others intending to compete with the Union (NAFTA and future FTAA).

1.2. The role of the largest shareholder in global trade

Owing to the successful implementation of a common commercial policy, the European Union has become the largest trading power in the world. According to World Trade Organization data, in 2011, the EU ranked first in the global trade in goods (excluding internal trade) with a share in exports at a level of 14.9%. The EU was ahead of China (whose share was 10.4%) and the United States (8.1%). The EU also ranks first in goods imports, where its share in 2011 was 16.2% (as compared to 15.6% for the United States and 12.0% for China). The position of the EU is even stronger on the global services market. Its share in the export of commercial services in 2011 amounted to 24.7%, while that of the US was 18.3% and of China – 5.8%. The EU imported 21.1% of the global volume of commercial services, while the USA only 12.9% and China – 7.7%⁷. There is a clear tendency of the EU maintaining its leading position, yet the growing share of China in the global trade in goods and services is becoming increasingly distinct.

It can be noted that the EU's external trade has grown faster than its gross domestic product⁸. The majority of the EU's trading turnover is generated by highly developed countries, such as the United States, Switzerland and Japan, and one-fifth by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA – USA, Canada and Mexico). The EU trades in all goods. The majority of its trading volume is generated by industrial products (machinery, chemicals and processed goods), and the proportion of services has been growing systematically, accounting for over one-third of overall turnover. Exports and imports are generally balanced. The EU has considerable surpluses in the industrial products trade, while it records deficits in the sector of raw materials and fuels. Like other highly developed economies, the EU is a net importer in this sector, while it is a net exporter of industrially processed final products. The trade surplus in several branches of industrial products (such as steel and textiles) has been diminishing since the 1980s. On account of the common agricultural policy implemented by the European Union, it is almost self-sufficient in agricultural products, and the export of food and drink products, as well as tobacco, more or less equals their export.

The EU's immense economic potential and its enormous share in global trade make it one of the main players in negotiations on a multilateral global trade regime leading to the gradual liberalization of international trade.

⁷ *International Trade Statistics 2012*, WTO, Geneva 2012.

⁸ The volume of commodities exported in 2011 went up by 19% and their import – by 17%. As concerns the export of commercial services growth amounted to 11% and in the import of services – to 9%. China's growth indicators are higher.

Being the largest shareholder in global trade, the EU is most interested in trade liberalization, since it can obtain the greatest benefits. This makes the EU one of the most committed supporters of the WTO and one exerting a powerful influence on this organization⁹. The EU carries on some sharp disputes with the United States, its prominent trade competitor. The EU has succeeded in obtaining serious concessions from the USA in the field of agricultural subsidies in return for the promise of partial reform of the EU's common agricultural policy. The EU and the USA are acutely divided by the issue of applying economic sanctions¹⁰.

The EU's strong position and international roles are also shaped by a variety of preferential agreements with a majority of countries and regions around the world. The hierarchy of these agreements reflects the EU's political priorities. The first ones are the EFTA countries that could easily join the Union, but which have opted to stay outside and be a part of the common market, the same way Porto Rico remains associated with the United States. The objective of the EU's agreements with Central European countries has been preparing them for EU membership. Therefore, regular political dialogue has been held with them in order to facilitate the development of closer standpoints on international issues. According to the European Commission, the agreements signed with the United States, Canada and Japan on the "mutual recognition" of goods standards in several manufacturing branches (based on the same principles that the internal EU market has adopted) can provide a foundation for a general free trade agreement to be concluded between the EU and NAFTA. The remaining WTO members are lower in the EU's hierarchy of access to the single market, while countries from outside this organization are at the very end of the EU's list of priorities.

Apart from the above-mentioned preferential agreements, resolutions on the common agricultural policy vest the EU with exclusive authority to enter into fishery agreements, to be a party to multilateral agreements on the protection of living resources of international waters, and join international organizations; for example the EU is a member of the North Atlantic Fisheries Organization. Since the time of amendments to the EEC Treaty introduced by The Single European Act and the Treaty on the European Union, the Community has obtained the power of entering into bilateral agreements on the protection of the natural environment and joining conventions and international ecological organizations.

1.3. The role of the provider of the largest development assistance

Both the European Union as a community and its member states actively conduct an external cooperation policy to promote development, and they contribute to the advancement of the economic, social and political progress of the world. Operating within

⁹ R. Senti, *The Role of the EU as an Economic Actor within the WTO*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 2002, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 111–113.

¹⁰ Cf. H. G. Krenzler, G. Wiegand, *EU-US Relations: More than Trade Disputes?*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 1999, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 153–180; A. Falke, *The EU-US Conflict over Sanctions Policy: Confronting the Hegemon*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 2000, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 139–163.

the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), EU member states take part in the coordination of aid and developmental policies of this club of the richest states of the world. To this end, member states ceded the representation of their positions in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) to the European Commission. According to OECD data, the Union is the largest global donor of development assistance. In 2011, the EU as a whole and its member states donated EUR 53 bn of official development assistance (ODA), which accounts for over half of total assistance funds globally granted by all states and international institutions, while the United States donated only 19.7% and Japan 6.8%. This amount was slightly smaller (by EUR 500 millions) than in the former year, accounting for 0.42% of GDP in the EU (in 2010 – 0.44% of GDP). This field of the EU's external activities has been affected by the crisis. Owing to that, it will be difficult to fulfil the obligation of EU member states to allocate 0.7% of GDP to the poorest countries in the world by 2015, as set by the Millennium Development Goals established by the UN.

The main direction of EU policy to promote development involves the implementation of successive association conventions with the countries of (sub-Saharan) Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP), such as Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou. These conventions bind the former colonies (of EU members) in Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific with the European Union, combining preferential trade conditions (zero tariff for 99% of imports from these countries) with subsidies and loans (amounting to ECU 12 bn from 1995–2000), and from the Fourth Lomé Convention signed in 1989 also with a requirement to respect human rights¹¹. EU countries allocate approx. 55% of all foreign aid to aid the countries of the Cotonou Convention. The means for this purpose are issued from outside EU budget funds.

The second priority of EU cooperation policy to promote development is given to non-EU Mediterranean countries. In the 1990s, the EU expanded its activity in this region, and since 1995, alongside twelve other Mediterranean countries, it has implemented the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership Program. In 2008, the EU commenced cooperation within the newly established Union for the Mediterranean¹². Within this framework the Union allocated financial resources aimed to aid its partners by means of

¹¹ P. Bagiński, *Europejska polityka rozwojowa. Organizacja pomocy Unii Europejskiej dla krajów rozwijających się*, Wydawnictwo Fachowe CeDeWu, Warszawa 2009; P. Frankowski, I. Słomczyńska, *Unia Europejska – Afryka subsaharyjska: uwarunkowania – mechanizmy – efektywność współpracy*, Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2011; B. Martenczuk, *From Lomé to Cotonou: The ACP–EC Partnership Agreement in a Legal Perspective*, “European Foreign Affairs Review” 2000, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 461–487; P. Hilpold, *EU Development Cooperation at a Crossroads: The Cotonou Agreement of 23 June 2000 and the Principle of Good Governance*, “European Foreign Affairs Review” 2002, Vol. 7, No. 1, p. 67–71; K. Arts, *ACP–EU relations in a new era: The Cotonou Agreement*, “Common Market Law Review” 2003, Vol. 40, No. 1, p. 95 and further; S. Bartelt, *ACP–EU Development Cooperation at a Crossroads? One Year after the Second Revision of the Cotonou Agreement*, “European Foreign Affairs Review” 2012, Vol. 17, No. 1, p. 1–25.

¹² J. Zając, *Polityka Unii Europejskiej w regionie śródziemnomorskim*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2002; M. Reiterer, *From the (French) Mediterranean Union to the (European) Barcelona Process: The ‘Union for the Mediterranean’ as Part of the European Neighbourhood Policy*, “European Foreign Affairs Review” 2009, Vol. 14, No. 3, p. 313–336.

MEDA funds, and since the beginning of 2007 it has used the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument.

The European Union has also run development policy for Central European countries and the countries of the former Soviet Union. Apart from EU trade agreements, the EU and its member states are the main donors of technical and financial assistance aimed to support the advancement of democratic institutions and market economy in the region¹³. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), established in 1989, is a significant institution facilitating the process of political transformation in Central and East European countries. A considerable portion of development assistance for former socialist countries was directed via the PHARE, TACIS and Obnova/CARDS funds. Since 2007, the EU has allocated development assistance funds for former socialist countries included in the European Neighbourhood Policy (including the Eastern Partnership) from the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

It should be mentioned that the European Union conducts a policy of assisting the development of poorer countries and regions combining it with the advancement of democracy¹⁴. In this manner, the EU increases its prestige and international position as one of the most influential actors in global international relations.

1.4. The role of the donor of the largest humanitarian aid

The European Union provides humanitarian, medical, and food assistance to countries located in different parts of the globe via two channels. One is the Humanitarian Aid Office, operating since 1992 under the supervision of the EU Commission, currently known as DG ECHO, which provides aid from common budget funds. Another channel involves humanitarian aid from EU member states. The EU grants humanitarian aid on the principles of impartiality and non-discrimination based on race, sex, religion or political beliefs. While this aid is not very large when compared to development assistance, it contributes to the improvement of the EU's position in the international arena.

ECHO aid is directed to the needy by UN agencies and over two hundred non-government organizations. Since 1992, the Office has signed over seven thousand individual agreements on providing humanitarian aid in over a hundred countries, and allocated over EUR 11 bn to this end. ECHO is involved in the majority of conflict areas in different regions of the world. ECHO's average annual budget has recently amounted to approx. EUR 700 millions. In 2010 alone the Office provided EUR 1.115 bn in humanitarian aid (emergency assistance, food, medical care, and assistance to ref-

¹³ P. Seeberg, *European Neighbourhood Policy, Post-normativity, and Pragmatism*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 2010, Vol. 15, No. 5, p. 663–679; L. Delcour, E. Tulmets, *Pioneer Europe? The ENP as a Test Case for EU's Foreign Policy*, *ibidem* 2009, Vol. 14, No. 4, p. 501–523; A. War-kotsch, *The European Union's Democracy Promotion Approach in Central Asia: On the Right Track?*, *ibidem* 2009, No. 2, p. 249–269.

¹⁴ For more see: R. Youngs, *European Union Democracy Promotion Policies: Ten Years*, "European Foreign Policy Review" 2001, Vol. 6, No. 3, p. 355–373.

ugees) in over eighty non-member countries. EU member states have provided humanitarian aid to an amount of EUR 1.878 bn.

The European Union is the largest global donor of humanitarian aid. The EU Commission and EU member states combined provide over a half of the world's official aid resources¹⁵.

2. International political and security roles

The European Union has been equipped with a special instrument by its member states, reconciling foreign and security policy and acting on the international stage as a single entity, this instrument being the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The policy encompasses an array of measures to influence the international environment, including diplomacy, sanctions, and responding to crises that occur outside the EU. The influence can be exerted by means of positive, negative or neutral methods. The Treaty on the EU has very broadly defined the scope of activity of the CFSP as overall issues pertaining to foreign and security policy. The policy is supposed to confirm the EU's identity in the international arena and to implement its external activity goals, stipulated in detail in Article 21 of the Treaty on the EU¹⁶.

The CFSP has three fundamental functions: a) to safeguard common values, fundamental interests, and security of the Union; b) to preserve peace and strengthen international security; c) to actively promote international cooperation, democracy and human rights. These functions require the EU to play an active role in diplomacy, peace stability and international security.

2.1. The role of an active diplomatic actor

Initiated in the early 1950s, European integration has vested the European Community with authority in the fields of economy and technology. However, the ongoing advances in the unification of commercial policy and the emergence of common markets in various branches required, on the one hand, political agreements between the representatives of member countries, and on the other hand brought implications for external policy of the Community which was drawn into negotiations and disputes with other entities outside its member states, such as the GATT or later the WTO. Similar consequences followed from the agreements on the development of cooperation with the ACP countries.

¹⁵ This piece of information is quoted in numerous documents published by the European Commission. On the other hand, the *GHA Report 2011* (Global Humanitarian Assistance, Kwart Court 2012) quotes data indicating that the EU and its member states are the largest donor of humanitarian aid, which however accounts only for 46% of the global volume of this aid.

¹⁶ For more see: R. Zięba, *Wspólna Polityka Zagraniczna i Bezpieczeństwa Unii Europejskiej*, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2007; S. Keukeleire, J. MacNaughtan, *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2008.

Regardless of the activity of the European Community to foster and expand European integration, Community member states have occasionally been required to take a stand in ongoing conflicts, in particular as regards the Middle East conflict, and to undertake new initiatives in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). In the early 1990s, the EC has faced a serious challenge of taking a diplomatic stance towards the democratic transformations that commenced in Central and Eastern Europe and towards the reunification of Germany. The necessity of the diplomatic involvement of the EC and its member countries was further caused by the requirements to enter into the agreements on economic and political cooperation with third countries. Instituted in 1970, European Political Cooperation (EPC) quickly turned out to provide too weak foundations for the reconciliation of political standpoints as concerned the issues of importance for EC member states and significant international matters. Therefore, when the EU was established, EPC was substituted by a more formalized CFSP.

Initially, the EU was a political superstructure over the existing European Community, but it has become a diplomatic actor who is increasingly more involved on the international arena. This was a logical consequence of the development and strengthening of integration in economic and social matters.

Christopher Piening rightfully notes that the spirit of cooperation and common thinking permeated those realms of activity that were considered not to cover matters of foreign policy, even though they actually did, as evidenced by numerous cooperation agreements signed by the Community with third countries or regional groupings, which were the eventual outcome of foreign policy, even when not initiated on the political forum. In this way, the EU's external economic relations assigned to the first pillar (EC) and EU foreign policy, as such assigned to the second pillar (CFSP), were mutually intertwined¹⁷.

The evolution of the European Community, indicating its gradually becoming an international actor, continued uninterrupted throughout the 1970s and 1980s, to be strongly stimulated in the next decade by the EU developing to become a strictly political actor¹⁸. This was accompanied by the number of member states increasing from six at the beginning of European Political Cooperation (EPC) to twenty-seven in 2007.

Having the CFSP at its disposal, the European Union takes a stand on all the most important international issues (including, among other things, liberalization of international trade, natural environment protection, combating transnational organized crime, protection of human rights, control of armaments and disarmament); maintains diplomatic relations and cooperates with the majority of world's states and the most significant interstate organizations of general objectives (primarily with the UN, OSCE, the Organization of African Unity (OAU)/African Union), and operates active policies towards all continents and regions.

The subject of the EU's interest covers all fields of international relations and it assigns particular importance to political dialogue intended to facilitate its expansion, economic cooperation, and political influence. Before 2009, in bilateral and multilat-

¹⁷ Ch. Piening, *Global Europe: The European Union in World Affairs*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder 1997, p. 197.

¹⁸ E. Rhein, *The European Union on its Way to Becoming a World Power*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 1998, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 332–334.

eral talks held at the highest level the EU was represented by the state holding the Presidency, the Secretary-General of the Council/High Representative for the CFSP, and on behalf of the Commission by the Commissioner responsible for external relations. By this token, EU diplomacy sought to ensure cohesion of the Union's three pillars, as stipulated in the Treaty on the European Union. After the *Treaty of Lisbon* entered into force (on December 1, 2009) the Union is represented outside by the President of the European Council and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The latter office combines the functions of the head of Union diplomacy with those of the commissioner for external economic relations, and in order to secure cohesion of all external activity – also with the position of the Vice-President of the European Commission, while the pillar structure of the Union has been abandoned. The High Representative also chairs the Foreign Affairs Council.

From the beginning, fulfilling the role of an active diplomatic actor, the EU has faced the problem of insufficient political will to conduct a common foreign policy. Some EU member states take advantage of the fact that the CFSP has an inter-governmental nature, and do not apply the standard of systematic cooperation written in the Treaty (Article 25 of the TEU), frequently demonstrating their attitudes differing from the majority's standpoint as regards numerous important international issues, or even undertaking unilateral activity. Refusing to agree with the EU's stances on its forums, they justify their behaviour by pointing out their significant national interests. Consequently, the EU as a whole frequently means less on the international arena than the total power of its member states. The *Treaty of Lisbon* provided opportunities for increased internal cohesion and efficiency of the EU as a diplomatic actor.

2.2. The role of stabilizer of international peace and security

Equipped with the CFSP, supplemented in 1999 by the European Security and Defence Policy, ESDP (renamed in 2009 on the Common Security and Defence Policy, CSDP), the European Union has gradually begun to act as a stabilizer of peace and international security. Initially, the CFSP was focused on the so-called soft aspects of security.

The role of the European Union as a stabilizer of peace and international security assumes mainly the forms of preventive diplomacy and mediation, instruments provided by the treaties, e.g. general guidelines, decisions (to determine actions, positions of the EU to a given geographical or particular matters of a geographical or thematic nature, and arrangements for the implementation of the decisions), and strengthening of systematic cooperation between member states in the conduct of policy (Articles 25 and 29). Typically, the EU also issues statements and declarations on the emerging threats, ongoing conflicts, and problems that require cooperation and international aid following resolved conflicts¹⁹. From its beginning, the European Union, as well as its member

¹⁹ T. Vončina, *Speaking with One Voice: Statements and Declarations as an Instrument of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 2011, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 169–186.

states, has had the power to enter into international agreements with third countries and other international organizations²⁰. The EU has been involved in all the most important security problems emerging in different regions of the world. The Arab-Israeli conflict, commenced in 1948, has been one of the most absorbing conflicts for the EU. Its involvement has been scarcely effective, though, due to Israeli opposition to EU mediation. Considerable humanitarian and advisory assistance provided to the Palestinians should be acknowledged here²¹.

After the military aspects provided in the ESDP were included in the CFSP it still did not comprise territorial defence. This matter remained with NATO and the Western European Union (WEU). This meant that the EU could only foster international security outside its external borders. This role was stipulated by the European Council in the documents that determined the idea of the ESDP, and it was also extensively discussed in the European Security Strategy of 2003²². Also, external actors, in particular the United States and NATO, were not interested in the European Union acting "in their capacity" securing the collective defence of the Atlantic Community states. The United States and their closest allies (Great Britain and Poland) even developed suspicions that the ESDP could harm the cohesion of the North Atlantic Alliance. The Union itself could not agree on the implementation of the provision made in the *Treaty of Maastricht* that a planned defence policy of the EU would result in providing common defence. Therefore, having been built since 1999, the ESDP's essential task was to prepare to carry out military and civilian crisis management operations, or rescue and humanitarian missions, and mediatory and combat operations to restore peace outside the EU.

Such operations have been taken over from the WEU and they continue to be sometimes called Petersberg tasks (missions). The EU commenced such missions in 2003. The first one was a police (hence civilian) operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by a minute military operation in Macedonia. In order to conduct the latter an agreement with NATO turned out to be necessary in the so-called Berlin Plus formula that allowed the EU to make use of confidential NATO military data. These first two crisis management operations turned out to be successful and were positively assessed by local populations.

In summer 2003, the EU conducted a huge military operation, Artemis, in the Democratic Republic of Congo on its own. While this mission did not contribute to stabilization of the situation in Congo, the experience gathered in the process of its preparation and conduct allowed the EU to conclude that it could conduct military operations alone, without support from the North Atlantic Alliance. Additionally, it turned out that crisis management operations did not require immense troops the size of a corps (50–60,000

²⁰ A. Mignolli, *The EU's Power in External Relations*, "The International Spectator", Vol. XXXVII, No. 3, July–September 2002, p. 112.

²¹ For more see: J. Zając, *Role Unii Europejskiej w regionie Afryki Północnej i Bliskiego Wschodu...*, p. 131–165.

²² Cf.: R. Zięba, *Europejska Polityka Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony*, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warszawa 2005, p. 46–57. Cf.: S. Biscop, *The European Security Strategy: A Global Agenda for a Positive Power*, Ashgate, Aldershot 2005.

soldiers) but rather forces of well-armed mobile units of quite small sizes. This convinced the EU to implement the concept of combat groups that were 1,500 or so strong. The third lesson learned from the Artemis operation was the conviction that the EU needed to become involved in the process of securing peace and resolving crises emerging far away from European borders²³. In the following years, the EU ran military and civilian operations in Africa, and civilian ones in the Middle East and Asia (Aceh in Indonesia and in Afghanistan)²⁴.

The EU's defence policy in recent years has also shown a growing involvement in the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction²⁵.

The largest EU commitment to the advancement of security and peace could be noted in the Balkans, Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa. In all these regions the EU closely cooperates with other international organizations and institutions in the fields of preventive diplomacy and activity aimed at resolving crises. Generally, one must agree with the fairly widespread opinion that the EU's operations have been barely successful. The most frequently quoted example of the inefficiency of the CFSP is the Yugoslavian wars, however, this should be supplemented by making a reservation that the instruments applied by the UN, CSCE/OSCE and the foreign policies of EU member states, Russia, or even the United States failed as well. It should also be noted that the numerous joint efforts of the EU and WEU to resolve the Yugoslavian conflict represented a significant contribution to alleviating the suffering of the civilian population affected by the war and paved the way for the peace agreements reached in Dayton in autumn 1995.

In general, assessing the role of the EU in stabilizing peace and strengthening international security, it should be noted that, although characterized by low efficiency, the Union applies the most extensive array of instruments of influence among international institutions. It encompasses politico-diplomatic (preventive diplomacy, mediation, participation in peace negotiations), economic (humanitarian aid and assistance in reconstruction after conflicts end), socio-cultural measures (advice and assistance in building democratic institutions), arbitration and advisory police missions, and military peace-keeping missions. The European Union is also preparing to conduct a full range of crisis response operations, including peace-making operations, using, to this end, its own armed forces which it is developing. The *Treaty of Lisbon* has extended the scope of crisis management operations to include joint disarmament operations, military ad-

²³ Cf.: S. Duke, *Consensus building in ESDP: The lessons of Operation Artemis*, "International Politics" 2009, Vol. 46, No. 4, p. 398–412.

²⁴ *European Security and Defence Policy: the first 10 years*, eds. Cf.: G. Grevi, D. Helly, D. Keohane, EU Institute for Security Studies, Paris 2009; *EU Conflict Management*, ed. J. Hughes, Routledge, London 2010; *Misje cywilne Unii Europejskiej*, ed. B. Przybylska-Maszner, Poznań 2010; *EU Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management: Roles, Institutions, and Policies*, eds. E. Gross, A. E. Juncos, Routledge, London 2011; Ch. Hill, *The EU's Capacity for Conflict Prevention*, "European Foreign Affairs Review", Vol. 6, Issue 3, "Autumn 2001, p. 331–333; S. Rynning, *Providing Relief or Promoting Democracy? The European Union and Crisis Management*, "Security Dialogue", Vol. 32, No. 1, March 2001, p. 87–101.

²⁵ R. Zięba, *Europejska Polityka Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony*, p. 95–101.

vice and assistance missions, operations to stabilize the situation after a conflict ends, and the struggle against terrorism (Article 43).

The *Treaty of Lisbon* contains a new and highly significant extension of the EU's competence, namely an alliance clause, by virtue of which member states are obliged to provide aid and assistance to a state that is the victim of armed aggression on its territory (Article 42, p. 7). This provision means that the EU becomes an organization for collective defence. Taking into consideration the efforts made by the EU in order to complete its array of security policy instruments with a military capacity it has lacked, it can be said that the Union is seeking to become a comprehensive security policy actor capable of acting at any stage of international conflicts (i.e. at the stage of hotbed, rise, resolving, quenching, and peace building) as well as the territorial defence of its own members. What follows from the defence policy the EU has conducted so far, the military measures are one element alongside an extensive range of civilian instruments at the disposal of the CFSP and Community policy. Although the common defence of the European Union to be achieved through the development of defence policy has been announced since the *Treaty of Maastricht* it continues to remain a dead letter, and EU member states have made no effort whatsoever in order to implement this provision. They have also failed to concretize the clause on the establishment of permanent structural cooperation written in the *Treaty of Lisbon*. Even the suggestion of the Weimar Triangle countries (France, Germany and Poland) of December 2010 to establish permanent EU operational headquarters was blocked by Great Britain.

Finally, one should emphasize that so far the European Union has enjoyed an immaculate reputation as an international peace actor that respects international law. All CFSP program documents and decisions issued by EU organs to operate to reinforce international peace and security emphasize their conformity with the UN standards and CSCE/OSCE principles. It also has to be noted that the EU skilfully avoids such behaviours during ongoing conflicts on the international stage that would indicate its intention to protect its own interests (e.g. economic interests) or to play the role of the "world's policeman". The Union willingly cooperates with other entities (states and international organizations) in joint efforts to resolve conflicts, restore peace, and achieve disarmament. This confirms that the EU applies a method of multilateralism in its activity to strengthen international security. All that gives the Union a 'moral' advantage and higher international prestige than, for example, the United States that, particularly during the George W. Bush administration (2001–2009), preferred unilateral measures that frequently defied international law and were against the opinions of its European allies.

3. The role of an attractive centre of civilization and promoter of European cultural values

The European Union is a special entity formed by West European states. Before the *Treaty of Lisbon* became effective, it was a unique international hybrid made of European Communities and nation-states, crowning a long trend of thinking and acting to-

wards building a unity based on the rich heritage of European civilization, primarily shaped by Greek culture, Roman law, universalist ideas of Christianity and secular humanist thought. The idea of integration has developed throughout European history, starting in Antiquity and continuing today²⁶.

The present development stage of integration is determined by discussions on the future of the EU held in its forums as well as in political and academic circles. The EU's structure, agreed at the inter-government conference concluded on December 10, 1991 in Maastricht, is symbolic in its resemblance of a Greek temple suspended by three pillars spanned in the front by the arch of the European Council²⁷. The achievements (including legal achievements) of the present EU in the realm of internationally agreed integration are a reflection of many old projects of European unification, frequently deemed utopian. Owing to its position, rooted in many centuries of continuous human efforts, particularly enlivened by the vision of its present "fathers", such as Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Alcide De Gasperi, Konrad Adenauer, Altiero Spinelli and others, and despite its multicultural character reflecting different national identities, the EU can be considered an attractive centre of civilization or, more accurately, the core of civilization in modern Europe, and an influential representative of European civilization globally²⁸.

Having at its disposal immense resources, means and practically tested procedures to make them workable, the EU plays an active role in terms of culture and civilization for both its member states and the external world. This is corroborated by the EU's increasing global attractiveness. Here, it is worth recalling the facts concerning the several rounds of the EU's enlargement: in 1973 Great Britain, Ireland and Denmark joined, followed by Greece in 1981, Spain and Portugal in 1986, Austria, Sweden and Finland in 1995, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Cyprus and Malta in 2004, Bulgaria and Romania in 2007, and Croatia in 2013. Further candidates are seeking accession to the Union or negotiating it (Turkey and West Balkan states).

The European Union does not have formalized instruments to exert civilizational influence and it does so via the attractiveness of the traditional and cultural values it is based on. Many countries in the world find its identity attractive, and this attractiveness is further augmented by the EU's international roles discussed above. The roles of the main instruments of EU's influence in terms of culture and civilization are somewhat vicariously played by association and partnership agreements, and the agreements on

²⁶ Cf.: K. Łastawski, *Historia integracji europejskiej*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2011; F. Gołembski, *Kulturowe aspekty integracji europejskiej*, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2008.

²⁷ Cf.: P. Gerbet, *La construction de l'Europe*, Imprimerie nationale Éditions, Paris 1999, p. 456–457.

²⁸ For more see: D. Jacobs, R. Maier, *European Identity: Construct, Fact and Fiction*, in: *A United Europe: The Quest for a Multifaceted Identity*, eds. M. Gastelaars, A. Ruijter, Shaker, Maastricht 1998, p. 13–34; *European Identity*, eds. J. T. Checkel, P. J. Katzenstein, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2009; ed. L.-E. Cederman, *Constructing Europe's Identity: The External Dimension*, Lynne Rienner, Boulder 2001; *An Anthropology of the European Union: Building, Imaging and Experiencing the New Europe*, eds. I. Bellier, T. M. Wilson, Berg, Oxford 2000, p. 53–73.

cultural cooperation and exchange, signed by EU member states with third countries. The European Community has entered into association and partnership agreements with a group of countries from Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific (ACP), non-member Mediterranean countries, and many other states from different continents. Alongside the regulations on political dialogue and commercial exchange, these agreements include provisions on development assistance. Such assistance is provided by the European Union and, separately, by EU member states to support the economic advancement of their partners, build infrastructure, train personnel, assist in building democratic institutions and, in general, to develop civil society; assistance programs also facilitate the development of intercultural dialogue. By virtue of the Cotonou Convention of 2000 the cooperation was opened to non-government actors, representatives of civil society, economic and social partners, and the private sector. Since the late 1980s (when the Lomé IV Convention was signed) the European Community, and later the EU, has introduced clauses that conditioned the provision of aid to developing countries on their securing respect for human rights, democratic principles and rule of law. Although this has sometimes stirred irritation between parties, it has reinforced the EU's influence on other countries and increased its attractiveness.

In general, it can be said that since 1958 the European Union has constantly sought new forms to involve the recipients of its assistance and encourage them to modernize their economies as well as to democratize their political systems and build a civil society. This operational method has been taken over by the European Union, established in 1993²⁹. The present European Union, reinforced and enlarged by new countries, continues to play an important role as a promoter of European cultural and civilizational values. Since these values are generally accepted and adapted to the reality of a majority of countries throughout the world, the EU is an attractive partner, also as a cultural and civilizational community.

* * *

The above reasoning can be concluded by the statement that the European Union plays various roles in the international arena, and confirms its growing significance and ambition to become a comprehensive and global international actor³⁰. For these ambi-

²⁹ Cf.: M. Breuning, *Foreign Aid, Development Assistance, or Development Cooperation: What's in a Name?*, "International Politics", Vol. 39, No. 3, September 2002, p. 369–377.

³⁰ R. Zięba, *Unia Europejska jako aktor stosunków międzynarodowych*, Scholar, Warszawa 2003; M. Telò, *Europe. A Civilian Power?: European Union, Global Governance, World Order*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2007; J. McCormick, *The European Superpower*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2007, p. 78–83; Ch. Bretherton, J. Vogler, *The European Union as a Global Actor*, Routledge, London 2005; R. Youngs, *The EU's Role in World Politics*, Routledge, London 2010; L. Aggestam, *European Foreign Policy and the Quest for a Global Role: Britain, France and Germany*, Routledge, London 2011, chapters 6–7; K. Becher, *Has-Been, Wannabe, or Leader: Europe's Role in the World After the 2003 European Security Strategy*, "European Security" 2004, Vol. 13, Issue 4, p. 345 and further; S. Wood, *The European Union: A Normative or Normal Power?*, "European Foreign Affairs Review" 2009, Vol. 14, No. 1, p. 113–128.

tions to be fulfilled, the European Union has to deal with the financial crisis and save the endangered zone of single currency. This is a sine qua non condition and failing to fulfil it may put the survival of the EU as an entity at risk³¹.

Summary

The European Union plays a few kind of international roles: economic, political and security, and civilisational ones. The economic roles are the following: the world leader of sustainable development and the pattern of successful and complex integration, the biggest shareholder of world trade, the supplier of biggest development aid, the donator of biggest humanitarian aid. The political and security roles are such as: the role of active diplomatic actor and the role of stabiliser of peace and international security. Moreover the EU plays the role of an attractive civilisational centre and promoter of European culture values.

Above roles confirm the EU has growing significance and ambitions to become a complex and global international actor. To materialise them the EU must to overcome the financial crisis and to save the threatened Euro zone, what is the sine qua non condition to survive the EU as a subject.

³¹ R. Zięba, *Przyszłość Unii Europejskiej jako projektu politycznego w świetle kryzysu 2008 roku*, in: *Kryzys 2008 roku a pozycja międzynarodowa Zachodu*, ed. R. Kuźniar, WN Scholar, Warszawa 2011, p. 132–148.