

Charting Transformation through Security

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Past Scholarship on EU-Africa relations have often focused on the economic and development relationship between the European Commission and the African Caribbean and Pacific group of countries. In the last few years, EU-Africa relations have changed to focus on the new Joint Africa –EU Strategy (JAES). Signed in 2007, the JAES is intended to signal a shift in EU-Africa relations. Whereas the recent literature on EU-Africa relations has focused on the implementation of the JAES, the literature has yet to address the shift/changes in the context of historical relations between the EU and Africa. This paper intends to remedy this gap in the literature.

The paper originates from the perspective that the provisions of JAES suggest a transformation of EU-Africa relations. As a new area of cooperation, the purpose of this paper is to examine security cooperation in the context of the potential shifts in EU-Africa relations. The potential shifts in EU-Africa relations are characterised by the European Union's support to African states and institutions. Specifically, the European Union's proposes to empower African capabilities for designing and implementing socio- economic and political action within a *cohesive, equal* and *holistic* partnership. The shift is partly because of recently developed EU security capabilities. In addition to the EU's recent capabilities, African states have also recently accepted the need for the continental organisation to contribute actively to peace and security the creation of the African Union. Using a framework based in historical institutionalism, this paper provides a broad overview of the extent to which new security cooperation has contributed to the changes within EU-Africa relations. This paper argues that the complexity of the EU-Africa relations demands that change be viewed as a gradual process existing within a continuum. This continuum ranges between the preponderance of the historical relationship, and Africa's self-assertion within the new framework of EU-Africa relations. This paper considers recent examples of security cooperation executed under the provisions of the JAES to illustrate the nature of the shifts in EU-Africa relations. The paper highlights the conditions, which enable these shifts. While these examples are confined to new security cooperation, they help to illustrate the new approaches to cooperation.