

Exporting Paradise?

*EU Development Policy towards Africa
since the End of the Cold War*

TIAGO FAIA



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By

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**CAMBRIDGE
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P U B L I S H I N G

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“The book is a much needed correction of the official EU writing of history on its own development policy. The book successfully shows that the EU development policy aimed at Africa was not ‘unique’. Furthermore, it boldly demonstrates that EU development policy has not been providing ‘leadership’ neither to the discourse nor the practice of international development”.

—Professor Gorm Rye Olsen, Professor of Global Politics and Head of Institute of Society and Globalization, Roskilde University

“Taking a social constructivist approach, Faia convincingly invalidates the EU’s claims that it demonstrates ‘leadership’ and ‘uniqueness’ in its development policy to Africa. He shows that since 1989 the EU has been a ‘norm taker’, adopting the dominant ideas of the Bretton Woods institutions. The book will be of interest to both scholars and practitioners of EU development policy and those with a broader interest in the role played by the EU in international politics since the end of the Cold War”.

—Dr. Stephen Hurt, Senior Lecturer in International Relations, Oxford Brookes University

“The book provides excellent insights into the rise of the principal actors in the international development system and how they were instrumental in spreading norms. By focusing on the EU as an actor, Faia successfully challenges the EU’s self-assertion of ‘uniqueness’ and ‘leadership’ in its development policy towards Africa. This is warmly recommended reading for any serious student of International Relations!”

—Dr. Sophia Moestrup, Deputy Director for Central and West Africa, National Democratic Institute (NDI)

“Faia advances a fresh academic and public policy analysis of some of the ‘myths’ surrounding the EU development agenda in Africa, and the EU as an international development actor. The book’s multi-disciplinary approach will be of interest to EU and international development academics and practitioners”.

—Manuel Amarilla Mena, Director of Inessys Ltd and Senior Consultant in International Politics and Security Studies

For Lucas and Eva

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ACRONYMS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
BIS	Bank for International Settlements
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States
CCNM	Centre for Cooperation with Non-Members
CIDIE	Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDA	Doha Development Agenda
DG	European Commission Directorate General
EAP	Environment Action Programme
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EPAs	Economic Partnership Agreements
EU	European Union
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GNP	Gross National Product
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IDGs	International Development Goals
IO	International Organisation
JEDH	Joint External Debt Hub
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MS	European Union Member States
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIEO	New International Economic Order
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
POGAR	Program of Governance in the Arab Region
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
REPA	Regional Economic Partnership Agreement
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SPA	Special Programme of Assistance for Africa
SWAC	Sahel & West Africa Club
TCBDB	Trade and Capacity Building Database
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Development
USA	United States of America
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

“Fraternity has subtleties”
—Fernando Pessoa

With its foundation in 1957, the European Union (EU) has progressed to become a significant regional organisation in the 21st century. Together with directing special care to its internal integration process, the Union maintains a clear ambition not to be an isolated entity in the international system. It aspires to gradually “assert its identity on the international scene” through the establishment of close relationships with a variety of political and economic partners worldwide.¹ Thereby, the EU aims to carry out a leading yet benevolent role in the working of international relations based on the principles of liberalism, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The formulation of a capable policy of development cooperation is central to the Union’s project to become a prominent international actor, where Africa remains its long-standing preferred development partner.²

This book aims to understand the contemporary character of EU development policy towards Africa at a time when the EU is gradually evolving into an increasingly prominent international actor. The Union’s close rapport with Africa results from the colonial legacy of some of its Member States (MS), progressing from an initial association agreement in 1957 to a development cooperation partnership in 1975 that was reformed

¹ European Commission, ‘Treaty on European Union’, *Official Journal*, C 321E, 29 December 2006.

² In the current research, all references to ‘Africa’ point specifically to the Sub-Saharan Africa region, as well as to the countries of that region that entered a development cooperation agreement with the EU as part of the ‘African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States’ (ACP) in 1975 and thereafter.

periodically and strengthened up to the present day. As a result of the five decade-long relationship maintained between the two parties, the EU often claims that its development policy regarding Africa is both “unique” in nature and vested with a “leadership” role in the promotion of development in the African continent. By doing so, the EU professes its development policy to be not only distinct (“unique”) from the policy orientation of other actors in the domain of international development, but also a primary policy reference (“leadership”) therein. In view of the stated EU claims, the book aspires to assess the alleged “unique” and “leadership” facets of EU development policy regarding Africa from the end of the Cold War until the end of 2008, and understand its character and expression in the context of international development.

The ensuing chapter provides the background to understand EU development policy and Africa-EU relations, and outlines the contours of the analysis put forward in the book. Firstly, it addresses the historical evolution of Africa-EU relations in the context of international development cooperation. Secondly, it illustrates the existence of an analytical and public policy puzzle in the understanding of the contemporary character of EU development policy *vis-à-vis* Africa that results from the apparent gap between the “unique” and “leadership” claims recurrently advanced by the EU concerning its development policy towards Africa, and its ability to establish the veracity of those claims. Thirdly, it examines the existing literature on the subject in light of the identified analytical and public policy puzzle. Fourthly, it contends that Finnemore’s Social Constructivist research agenda has the capacity to both ponder aspects of EU development policy concerning Africa that other accounts have disregarded, and further the understanding of the subject.

1.1. Africa-EU Relations in Time and Context

Departing from a colonial-based model formalised by the 1957 Treaty of Rome creating the European Economic Community, Africa-EU relations evolved into development cooperation agreements under the Yaoundé Conventions, the Lomé Conventions, and most recently the Cotonou Agreement.³ Under the Treaty of Rome and the Yaoundé Conventions, the EU and Africa were the sole parties to the relationship.

³ Following the conclusion of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, Africa-EU relations rested upon the Yaoundé Conventions I and II, signed in 1963 and 1969, the Lomé Conventions I, II, III, and IV, signed in 1974, 1979, 1984, and 1989, and the Cotonou Agreement signed in 2000.

Subsequently, in 1975, Africa-EU relations integrated the new development partnership arrangement struck between the Union and the newly created African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP)—the Lomé Convention.⁴ Arguably, the Lomé Convention initiated a new era for Africa-EU relations resulting from its clear break with the alleged colonial tag of the Yaoundé Conventions and support to the New International Economic Order (NIEO) initiative launched by some developing countries at the time.⁵ Following a mandate that spanned twenty-five years and four periodic renewals, the Lomé Convention expired in 2000 and gave way to the Cotonou Agreement. Most analysts of EU development policy hailed the agreement as the beginning of a new age for the Africa-EU relationship that broke with the Lomé tradition and set a distinct platform for future development cooperation between the two partners.⁶ With a life span of twenty-years, the Cotonou Agreement is set to undergo revision every five-years to combine the maintenance of the treaty's original directives with its adaptation to potential new challenges that may emerge in both the states and in the international system.

The EU commitment to development cooperation in Africa over the past five decades transformed it into a relevant actor in the continent's existing international support structure for development promotion. Following Africa's decolonisation process in the 1960s, a number of international organisations (IOs) instituted what became an influential external structure to assist the future development of the continent. The World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations (UN), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

⁴ The creation of the ACP group of states results directly from the 1973 UK accession to the Community, which brought all its former colonies under the umbrella of the EU policy of development cooperation. Accordingly, most former colonies of EU Member States from the African, Pacific, and Caribbean regions established the ACP group of states in 1975 under the Georgetown Agreement as a platform for development cooperation with the EU; The Courier, 'Georgetown—The Foundation of the ACP Group', Special Issue, March 2008

⁵ In the early 1970s, a group of developing countries operating within the framework of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) proposed the creation of a new international economic order more considerate of their needs through the reformation of international trade and development assistance. Many experts on EU development policy sustain that the Lomé Convention was its most emblematic expression at the international level; Simmonds, Kenneth, 'The Lomé Convention and the New International Economic Order', *Common Market Law Review*, Vol. 13, 1976

⁶ Arts, Karin, 'ACP-EU Relations in a New Era: The Cotonou Agreement', *Common Market Law Review*, Vol. 40, 2003

(OECD), and most recently the World Trade Organisation (WTO) formed the nucleus of the international group of actors.⁷ They stood behind the foundation of international development, and have had a considerable impact on its practice and discourse up to the present day. They marked the evolution of international development in a variety of spheres—lending, assistance, and discourse—and established a set of norms that ultimately defined the evolution of its composing structure worldwide.⁸

The stated IOs allocated most of their resources towards promoting development cooperation across the world, and evolved across time as the leading paradigm-setters of international development.⁹ They conceived detailed development promotion strategies for the most impoverished countries and regions of the globe—with particular incidence on the African continent—to improve the livelihoods of its citizens through extensive economic reform. The resulting development programmes launched by the IOs in question aimed to set in motion the economic development of their targeted countries and regions, as well as integrate them in the international system, to stimulate greater quality of life for their citizens and gradually eliminate poverty.

Concomitantly, and through the adoption of a multifaceted policy approach to development promotion in Africa that encompassed aid, trade, and humanitarian assistance, the EU grew into a capable international development actor today. Under that capacity, it incorporated gradually the

⁷ The reference to the UN in the current introductory section is overtly general, appearing accurately defined under the UN agencies and programmes relevant to international development promotion in the subsequent chapters. While there is a large variety of agencies and programmes identified in this research with a development portfolio, some of the most influential are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The WTO is not an international development IO *per se*. It is an institution founded in 1995 to replace the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and with the objective to supervise, manage, and support the liberalisation of international trade. However, as trade liberalisation and development strategies became increasingly indissociable in time, the WTO came to acquire a preeminent role in the dominion of international development today.

⁸ Rist, Gilbert, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, (London: Zed Books, 1997)

⁹ Jolly, Richard *et al.*, *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Staples, Amy, *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Changed the World, 1945-1965*, (Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2006)

existing international support structure for development promotion over the recent decades.¹⁰ An illustrative display of this progress began to materialise in the 1980s, and gathered further momentum in the 1990s, when the Union sought to establish a close rapport with the stated IOs. Its main goal appeared to be to integrate the international initiatives launched by the IOs to create greater policy coordination and cohesion amongst all actors active in international development cooperation.¹¹ Following some years of significant progress, the current relationship between the EU and the aforementioned IOs reached unprecedented levels of collaboration concerning development promotion in Africa and in the developing world at large.

The establishment of closer relations between the EU and the IOs in question regarding the promotion of international development pertains not only to the Union's particular development policy vision, but also to its ambition to become a prominent international actor in the 21st century. Accordingly, in 2000, the EU joined the UN-sponsored global initiative for development promotion and poverty eradication—the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—based on a set of eight specific policy targets to be met by 2015.¹² As the MDGs evolved into one of the paradigms of

¹⁰ In 2008 the EU became collectively responsible for approximately 54 per cent of the world's Official Development Assistance (ODA), with the European Commission alone disbursing the fourth biggest net contribution to worldwide ODA at USD13.527bn., and the second largest net contribution to ODA in Sub-Saharan Africa at USD4.719bn.; OECD, *OECD Annual Report 2009*, (Paris: OECD, 2009). Similarly, the EU remains Sub-Saharan Africa's largest single trading partner absorbing 31.4 per cent of its global exports and providing 27.8 per cent of its total imports; International Monetary Fund, *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook 2008*, (Washington D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2009)

¹¹ The first most striking example of the stated trend took place during the 1990s, when the EU sought to integrate the proceedings of various international conferences organised by the UN with a view to revamp development cooperation across the world—United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (June 1992, Rio de Janeiro), World Conference on Human Rights (June 1993, Vienna), International Conference on Population and Development (September 1994, Cairo), World Summit for Social Development (March 1995, Copenhagen), Fourth World Conference on Women (September 1995, Beijing), Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (June 1996, Istanbul)—and it carried on into the new millennium, when the EU fostered closer relations with the WB, the IMF, the OECD, the UN (specifically the UNDP), and the WTO, as Chapter 5 demonstrates in further detail; Schechter, Michael, *United Nations Global Conferences*, (New York: Routledge, 2005)

¹² The eight MDGs are as follows: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger, Achieve Universal Primary Education, Promote Gender Equality and Empower

contemporary international development, the EU professed its further commitment to multilateralism and cooperation with the UN in a 2003 European Commission communication.¹³ Consistently with its adopted approach, the Union went on to strike a recent partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which established a platform for collaboration in various activities in the field of human rights, good governance, food security, education, and crisis management.¹⁴ Similarly, it set up a concerted relationship with the WB during the past decade through the alignment of policy assistance, the creation of common Trust Funds, and the joining of forces in several development initiatives around the world, including debt relief.¹⁵ Additionally, the EU fostered a closer understanding with the OECD since the turn of the century through a focus on the harmonisation, alignment, and management of aid under the guidelines of the OECD-sponsored Paris Declaration of 2005.¹⁶ Furthermore, the Union also sought to adopt a more participative stand in the workings of the WTO, specifically in its Doha Development Agenda (DDA) project launched in 2001, which aimed to protect developing states from the economic unbalances of the globalised international trading system and foment the implementation of more sustainable forms of development worldwide.¹⁷

Women, Reduce Child Mortality, Improve Maternal Health, Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases, Ensure Environmental Sustainability, and Develop a Global Partnership for Development; United Nations, 'United Nations Millennium Declaration', General Assembly, A/Res/55/2, 8 September 2000; European Commission, 'Speeding Up Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals—The European Union's Contribution', Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, and the Economic and Social Committee, COM (2005) 132 final, 12 April 2005

¹³ European Commission, 'European Union and United Nations: The Choice of Multilateralism', Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, COM (2003) 526 final, 10 September 2003

¹⁴ United Nations, *Improving Lives: Results from the Partnership of the United Nations and the European Commission in 2007*, (Brussels: United Nations System in Brussels, 2008)

¹⁵ Europa-Press Releases (RAPID), 'Collaboration Between the European Commission and the World Bank', MEMO/06/168, 21 March 2006

¹⁶ OECD, *The European Community: Development Assistance Committee—Peer Review*, (Paris: OECD, 2007)

¹⁷ Europa-Press Releases (RAPID), 'WTO Doha Development Agenda: WTO Mid-point Agreement Paves the Way for Future Conclusion of Trade Round—a Stronger Multilateral Trading System', IP/04/1011, 2 August 2004

Progressively, the EU evolved into a capable actor in international development and arguably incorporated its existing structure through the promotion of a progressive rapprochement with its leading actors. Therein, the Union maintained a distinctive understanding of the nature and role of its development policy. In the form of its publications and public standing on the issue, the EU recurrently advanced its development policy as effectively “unique” in comparison with that of other actors, and vested with the capacity to serve as a leveraging force (“leadership”) in the discourse and practice of international development. The double claim sustained by the Union regarding its policy of development cooperation *vis-à-vis* Africa emerged for the first time in 1975 upon the signing of the Lomé Convention, and was subsequently kept and re-enforced up to the present day. Following the signing of the Lomé Convention in Lomé, Togo, on 28 February 1975, Claude Cheysson, the then European Commissioner for Development, asserted that it was an “agreement which, I say it with some pride, is unique in the world and in history. Never before has there been any attempt to do anything of this kind”.¹⁸ Speaking at a time when the EU and Africa were attempting to overcome the colonial shadow arguably still present in the preceding Yaoundé Conventions, Cheysson’s statement set the tone for the Union’s reading of the nature and role of its development policy in the context of international development in the decades to come.

Correspondingly, the European Commission went on to claim in a 1982 memorandum that “development policy is a cornerstone of European integration (...) because of the novel forms of international cooperation it has pioneered. Today it is a manifestation of Europe’s identity in the world at large and a major plank in the Community’s external policies generally.”¹⁹ The EU continued to maintain the “unique” and “leadership” claims regarding the nature and role of its development policy towards Africa in the domain of international development, as confirmed subsequently at the signing ceremony of Lomé Convention IV on 15 December 1989. Thereupon, Michel Rocard, the then President of the Council of the European Community, voiced the recurring EU perception of its partnership with Africa and asserted that “no other instrument in the world has instituted such carefully-planned, concrete and positive ties” between developing and developed countries, which he eulogised for “its

¹⁸ Cheysson, Claude, ‘An Agreement Unique in History’, *The Courier*, Special Issue, No. 31, March 1975, p. 12

¹⁹ European Commission, ‘Memorandum on the Community’s Development Policy’, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, Supplement 5 (82), 5 October 1982