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As a regional integration scheme, the EU is not a unitary actor; it consists of several different institutions and, currently, 27 member states. Neither is the UN a unitary actor, being instead a global, intergovernmental organization consisting of a variety of sub-units. Both of these schemes develop and move within the global structure of international relations, characterized by raising powers, realignments in terms of global economic relations and structures, and, finally, shifts in priorities and preferences by global actors.

It can be said that the EU and the UN are both entities strongly upholding principles related to the rule of law, rules-based global governance and multilateralism. Both tend to be characterized by similar norms and principles, including the defence of human security, human rights and general human well-being. Obviously, the EU deals with the internal situation of its 27 members (28 before Brexit), while the UN addresses the priorities and concerns of its, currently, 193 member states. Both organizations are built upon coalitions of like-minded states, though changes in (democratic) governments will often lead to changes in the priorities addressed by these member states on the regional and global levels.

Interactions between the EU and the UN are just one example of relations existing between regional integration schemes and the UN as a global governance organization. Similar patterns exist, for example, in exchanges between the UN and the AU, as well as several integration schemes in Latin America. While the UN is based on states as members, regional integration schemes, sometimes encompassing supranational tendencies, seem to be increasingly important to the UN to implement some of its actions. Peace initiatives and missions on the African continent are an example of such interlinkages between regional and global actors.

The EU has changed over time. From a small group of members – six at its foundation – to the current large entity it constitutes, consisting of a total of 27 member states, it has deepened and widened in the sense of having grown in membership by more than four times between its origins

and the present, while also having started to address a wider range of issues in substantive terms. Similarly, the UN has broadened and deepened over time: from 51 member states back at its origins to almost four times this size (193 members) currently. With the enlargement and expansion of the organizations came institutional adaptation, notably, in the EU context; while the UN did not see all that much in terms of institutional change and adaptation over time, the UN system has expanded and new organizations and substantive areas have been added to its work over the course of recent decades. This reflects changes in the ways the organizations work, as well as the adapted priorities of their member states and a desire, in general, to widen the substantive areas of action of the organizations.

As this book has demonstrated, the EU has gradually evolved from an entity focused on the integration of core sectors of their industries just after the Second World War – coal and steel – to an internal market and an entity increasingly displaying features of a collective actor in world politics, speaking 'with one voice'. Similarly, the UN has evolved, notably, due to changing global power constellations over time, including a certain reduction of importance of the East–West divide, processes of decolonization and a strengthening of the North–South divide.

The UN is of crucial importance in terms of addressing a multitude of issues that constitute challenges to human well-being globally. Its activities – carried out by several specialized agencies, programmes, funds and other entities – are far-ranging and include advancing human well-being, promoting the rule of law, protecting vulnerable groups (such as refugees) and combating hunger, conflict and violence. While the UNGA and the UNSC operate based on the issuing of resolutions – legally binding ones in the case of the UNSC and 'visible' statements on topics of interest in the case of the UNGA – many of the UN's organizations address specific challenges in their activities. While there can clearly be overlaps in the activities of, for example, some of the UN's specialized agencies, programmes and funds – think, for example, about the UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women or the UNDP – there are also strong synergies and complementarities in their actions. It would be hard to imagine a world without the UN; in fact, it would probably be a world much worse than it currently is in various aspects (such as the extent of violence, poverty and challenges to human health and security).

The EU, in essence, is and was a 'peace project' aimed at integrating the economies of former enemies in war in ways that would make the eruption of violent conflict impossible in the future. It has evolved over time into a strong economic union – developing from a customs union back in the 1960s, to an internal market largely completed in the 1990s, to (for several member states) a monetary union that took effect at the very end of the last millennium. While the EU has developed and, in certain respects, truly strengthened over the course of recent decades, it has also faced challenges,

while increasingly following a trend towards development as an external, 'global' actor. In many ways, the EU is a promising project, upholding some of the core principles of protecting humans globally, as it is itself based on clear patterns of multilateralism, rules-based governance, negotiations, diplomacy and decision-making between sovereign member states. Once it has found a compromise between the delegates of its member states, it also carries it into various settings at the UN, most recently, via its EU delegations that coordinate and streamline the activities and priorities of EU member states.

Clearly, the UN is also composed of regional groupings and units that are characterized by patterns of negotiation and diplomacy among their own member states. However, in an international comparison, the EU is probably among the most densely integrated schemes, having pooled many competencies – including in most areas of trade – to a common, supranational system of decision-making. Where it often has difficulties to act (such as in the area of migration governance, health, taxation and some aspects of security and foreign affairs), it is often the principle of unanimity among member states that prevents it from moving ahead more quickly.

Similarly, the UNSC is often hampered in its actions by resolutions that need the support of the P5, all holding veto power. Such institutional constraints and decision rules agreed upon several decades ago risk slowing down the speed with which the organization can take action and move ahead to ensure peace and security in the collective interest. The veto power of an individual EU member state in a core area of substantive relevance to the EU and the very veto power of P5 members in the UNSC constitute hurdles that are difficult to overcome for the collectivity of the organizations' members, while there is often a clear demand – in public opinion too – for the organizations to move ahead quicker and to uphold collective principles and goals in their actions.

Chapter 1 of this book described the focus and sequence of topics discussed in this book and demonstrated how various aspects of the roles of the EU and of the UN in global governance are related. Chapter 2 provided information on how the EU has developed from a small group of member states that started aligning their positions in trade policy to a gradually expanding regional integration scheme that also intensified efforts to coordinate the positions of its member states on major themes in foreign policy. This included alignment within various parts of the UN – notably, coordination within the UNGA and the UNSC. The path taken was definitely not always a smooth one, and EU member state priorities have often differed in the past when foreign policy challenges had to be addressed. However, over time, in institutional as well as substantive terms, alignment in foreign policy and the external action of EU member states as a collectivity has nonetheless intensified.

Chapter 3 of the book addressed the ways in which the EU has dealt with two recent crises: the 'Euro crisis' and, more recently, the economic and fiscal challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It discussed the ways in which the EU and the UN have moved forward in terms of financial collaboration, an important aspect being the explicit incorporation of the SDGs into EU action, including in the framework of the 'European Semester', which aims to streamline EU member states' fiscal and macroeconomic plans. Most notably, the latest steps in terms of economic and financial responses to combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to have strengthened the supranational character of the EU. With the EU's most recent steps taken and, notably, the adoption of the NGEU Recovery Fund, more competencies have been shifted to the European Commission and the EU level more generally. This implies that the EU is likely not only to constitute more of a unitary actor in the realm of external action in the years to come, but might well – as a response to the COVID-19 health crisis – also move towards more unity in terms of its fiscal foundations.

Chapter 4 addressed challenges that both the EU and the UN are currently facing in view of pressures on multilateralism. Clearly, populist and nationalist trends have affected the ways in which regional and global organizations are perceived, as well as whether their activities and ways of functioning are seen as 'legitimate' and 'effective' by a larger public. The pressures that emanated from the US under President Trump's administration on the ways in which international organizations, such as the UN, function have been considerable. The shift to the Biden administration has reduced some of these very pressures, but both the EU and the UN still face challenges nonetheless, not least in financial terms. Both entities, however, are based on clear patterns of multilateral negotiations and mechanisms aiming to generate consensus among their member states. The EU, being a regional entity that needs to find a common voice and agreement on ways to proceed among – now – 27 member states, may constitute a smaller example of what is similar practice within the 193-member UN. Both organizations strongly reinforce the principle of rules-based governance and use multilateralism and diplomacy as decision-making principles at their core.

Chapter 5 addressed how the UN as an organization has been affected by, and has dealt with, the various challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. It discussed how the ways of operation of the institution and its various units had to be adapted at fairly short notice. The pandemic affected the very ways in which multilateral negotiations and international diplomacy are conducted through a radical shift from in-person contacts and meetings to virtual contact and events. The shift affected the ways in which, for example, the yearly UNGA general debate has been conducted, as well as the multitude of meetings underpinning the work of the organization – whether at headquarters or within the UN's various specialized agencies, programmes

or funds. It still remains to be seen how such shifts will affect international negotiations and diplomacy in the future. Clearly, some elements of the new ways of conducting diplomacy will be here to stay. In general, it can be said that the adaptation of the UN to the new situation has been swift and the organization has initiated some major initiatives to combat the crisis and its effects, including the UN Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire to enable a full focus on the global 'common enemy' – the new virus.

Chapter 6 examined the EU's role in the central UN decision-making bodies of the UNGA and UNSC. Next to demonstrating developments over time, the chapter showed how there has been a historically progressive increase in the voting cohesion of the EU's member states, which has been accompanied by targeted EU policies to increase voting cohesion in international organizations. Nevertheless, no automatism can be assumed; permissive contexts continue to be decisive. Finally, the activities of the EU in the UNHCR – a subsidiary organ of the UNGA – were presented as an area where the EU has been particularly successful in translating its position into influence. The second part of the chapter gave an overview of the EU in the UNSC, where the EU's role has traditionally been smaller. However, practices of information sharing and informal cooperation between the EU's permanent and non-permanent UNSC members have emerged over the years. Since the UK's exit from the EU in 2020, the EU has lost a permanent UNSC member, which previously served with France as a key transmission belt of EU positions to the UNSC. With regard to the broader debate on UNSC reforms, the EU member states have so far not been able to generate a unified position; rather, competing proposals prevail. It is likely that the EU in the UNGA will continue to function as an enhanced observer and facilitate the voting cohesion and cooperation of EU member states; the EU will most likely continue to have no direct representation in the UNSC, but rather be of importance to the UNSC where the EU is operationally involved as a significant foreign policy actor in the maintenance of peace and security. In order to make significant progress towards a permanent seat for the EU in the UNSC, the creation of majority voting in the CFSP is necessary – an issue currently under discussion.

Chapters 7 and 8 provided case studies on EU–UN collaboration. Chapter 7 discussed how cooperation between the EU and the UN is conducted in daily patterns of interaction in Brussels. It demonstrated how various UN entities try to find alignment in their positions towards the (different parts of) the EU. The chapter further addressed some of the coordination activities between, notably, the UNHCR, UNICEF and entities of the EU dealing with challenges to migration, which have put a special emphasis on the mechanisms available to protect children in migration. Clearly, there are many overlapping areas of activity of various parts of the UN and different entities of the EU. Synergies are being explored, and both organizations

strive to be influential in the planning and preparatory activities of the other organization.

Chapter 8 had as a focal point cooperation between UN Women and the EU. It began with a brief introduction to their relations and previous and current agreements. Following this, it provided a deeper analysis of the respective programmes and agreements, focusing notably on the Spotlight Initiative and EU 4 Gender Equality: Together Against Gender Stereotypes and Gender-Based Violence. It discussed challenges to the respective programmes in relation to the gendered impact of COVID-19. Then, it examined the topics of gender mainstreaming and the WPS agenda, as well as the role of EU institutions in facilitating this agenda. Overall, the chapter demonstrated how the EU and the UN have been advancing gender equality and supported the role of women and of girls in various contexts, including those characterized by conflict and war.

Chapter 9 provided thoughts about developments and prospects for the EU and the UN in global governance. Given current challenges to multilateralism and the role the EU and the UN play within global governance, it looks ahead at what changing global power relations, pressures on multilateralism and new modes of negotiation and multilateral diplomacy could imply for the two entities, on the one hand, and their interconnections, on the other. Clearly, given the ways in which the EU operates, based on multilateral negotiations between its member states – alongside its supranational institutions – it is a core example of 'rules-based governance'. It upholds such principles as the rule of law and strongly supports human rights (in the sense of both individual human rights and economic and social rights). However, being constituted of 27 member states, each with different preferences and priorities, means that finding agreement within the collectivity of members is not always easy. Nonetheless, in most cases, the scheme seems to manage to agree on a common path and remains a driver for these important core principles on the global level. The chapter also discussed the concept of minilateralism as a potential alternative mode and constituent part of multilateralism (on the regional, but potentially also on the global, level). Clearly, the UN is of quintessential importance for global governance and the maintenance of peace and stability in a broader, encompassing context. The work conducted by its various units and entities on a daily basis is of central importance to human well-being in a general sense. A world without the UN is probably beyond imagination today and would be a much worse place to be in. The UN increasingly relies on regional organizations as partners for its activities; in this sense, regional multilateralism and international cooperation often go hand in hand.

The EU as a regional integration scheme and the UN as a global governance institution have several overlapping core aims and principles. While the EU is focused on the internal, regional developments of its member states, next

to external, global action, the UN, by definition, is an actor operating on the global level. The synergies between the two organizations are evident and important. Complementarities and patterns of mutual reinforcement also apply to collaboration between the UN and other regional organization schemes, such as the AU.

Global power politics, at times, tends to undermine and endanger multilateralism on the international level and collective decision-making patterns among member states. In the ideal case, however, global-level organizations are 'resilient' and able to continue their activities despite such trends. Overcoming the 'all-against-all' dynamics of power politics is of quintessential importance to the maintenance of global stability. It is multilateral negotiations and decisions derived based on patterns of rules-based governance that allow collective steps to be taken in the interest of an organization's collectivity of member state actors. Finally, complementarity and synergies between regional and global governance actors are, without a doubt, of core importance to the maintenance of peace and stability, both in a regional and in an international context.