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Human security in EU strategy: reflecting on the experience of EUPM in Bosnia and Herzegovina and EULEX in Kosovo

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ABSTRACT

In the early 2000s, the EU incrementally appeared to have espoused a distinguishing *human security* discourse. This was bound not only to inform its crisis management operations but also to shape its global role. Today, the Union seems to move toward a *global strategy* blueprint and an ensuing public discourse. Human security is no longer mentioned as a grand objective, though it has not been moved to the background. It is cited as an end of one just component of EU global strategy. This article tries to map out how relevant EU texts speak about human security and highlights benchmarks in the cases of the European Union Police Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo. By focusing on the mandate and effects of these civilian missions, it finds that the Union has refrained from operationalising a human security perspective to direct them. Although it has not taken steps to internalize and turn human security into an overarching driver of its engagement, elements of human security advancement might be recorded.

KEYWORDS

EU civilian missions; EU global strategy; human security; BiH; Kosovo

Introduction

What is the place of human security in the EU's Global Strategy (EUGS 2016)? In 2016, the EU launched the strategy to guide its external action for the coming years (Council of the European Union 2016a, 3). It also launched an implementation plan to pursue EUGS in the area of security and defence (Council of the European Union 2016b). In this context, the question is not only how the EU understands human security but also whether it promotes human security's essence, that is, freedom from fear and want.

At present, the EU enhances its strategic and operational capabilities to align EUGS with its Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) (European Council 2018, 4–6). Hence, EUGS (2017) has replaced the European Security Strategy (ESS 2003) together with its follow-up implementation Report (hereafter cited as the Report) (European Council 2008). Of these three principal EU documents, the concept of human security is mentioned in the Report and EUGS. While it was presented in the former as a paramount strategic end, it is listed in the latter as one among many objectives.

This article traces this discursive change by discussing how relevant documents situate human security in EU strategy. It also examines whether EU practices have instrumentalized human security by comparing the mandate and effects of two CSDP civilian missions: the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and the European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) in Kosovo. The main inference is that although, in principle, human security remains a discursive point of reference in EU strategy planning, it does not form an integrated

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