

THE ROLE OF EUROPEAN UNION IN GLOBAL POLITICS

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One of the most remarkable features of modern European politics has been the process of European integration. Beginning with the Coal and Steel community, the nation-states of Europe have gradually and steadily moved towards ever- close union.

(Russell J. Dalton and Richard C. Eichenberg)

Abstract

Basically, the European Union was formed to erase the rivalries found among the European countries. In the beginning this dream was looked difficult to come true and it seemed that the EU would fail to achieve its goal. But, the efforts of its founders were appreciating that they enhanced the economical conditions of the region which improved the social conditions of Europe.

Hence, such developments produced a successful integration of member countries. In fact this integration is not only the integration of states but it is the integration of Europeans which is based on equality, justice and prosperity.

In this article, I have tried to highlight the role of EU in the integration of Europe as well as tried to put light on the issues which were before EU at time of its formation and discussed the future of integration of Europe.

Keywords: *Europe, European union, integration, cold war, future*

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Introduction

The today's world is divided into two parts, developed world and under developed world. The European union has been strengthened after the integration of European states the role of EU in this integration is pivotal in the sense that it removed the differences which were deep- rooted and had resulted in wars twice in a same century. These differences were cultural, linguistic, territorial, economical, religious etc, etc. and Europeans were seemed scattered society which would have no future. Initially, the EU worked out to build mutual confidence among the European nations in beginning its efforts were based on European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) by way of promoting trade to bring prosperity in the continent.

Definitely, this integration came upon an influential position with the enlargement of EU which happened after the dissolution of the USSR. In fact, the end of cold war was the beginning of a new era of Europe that the iron curtain of communism lifted and opened up the possibilities of re-connecting Western and Eastern Europe.

In the meantime, the integration strengthened the global character of EU to play an influential role regarding global issues. Initially, its role was seemed to be just regional but now it has proved itself that it can deal inter- continental and extra- continental matters with same spirit. If one hand the EU motivate its members to provide fiscal support to poor members states then other side it promotes democracy in the world.

We know that Europe possesses a rich historical background which includes literature, art, religion, culture, civilization, languages and nationalism. Today, a European feels proud that he is European and belongs to a society which has prestigious history. But, in yesteryears, each of the nations of Europe was engaged in war and hate. The formation of European Union provided a collective identity on which every European is proud that is Europeanism. In this regard the role of EU is appreciating that it never played the role of absolute power it encouraged the mutual cooperation. The absolute character makes strong stronger and weak weaker and soon the body becomes ambiguous. The European Union has always focused on the promotion of democracy and human rights. The European Union believes that democracy and human rights are universal values that should be vigorously promoted around the world. They are integral to effective work on poverty alleviation and conflict prevention and resolution, in addition to being valuable bulwarks against terrorism. Having come into force on January 1, 2007, the European instrument for democracy and human rights (EIDHR) is the concrete expression of the European Union's intention to integrate the promotion of democracy and human rights in to all of its external politics.¹

It means that integration of European Nations rejects the one man rule as they have suffered from the miseries of unilateralism - the fascism, Nazism and communism are examples. The insane thought of dictators had badly damaged the peace and harmony of the continent of Europe. Therefore, the EU has made its prior motive to discourage

¹ Human Rights and democracy, Development and cooperation- europeaid European Commission
ec.europa- eu/europeaid/what/human-rights/ index- en.htm

dictatorship. In this sense, the attitude of EU is very strict that's why Turkey has not been the member of EU so far because of non-existence of democracy. Now, when Turkey has made constitutional reforms towards democracy, its case is being considered for EU.

The formal integration of Europe was not a convenient task, the great European politicians like Thatcher said, in her Burges speech. She laid down her five guiding principles for the future success of Europe. These principles were willing and active cooperation between independent sovereign states as the best way to build a successful European community; community policies which would tackle contemporary problems 'in a practical way, however difficult'; Community policies which would encourage enterprise through 'action to free markets, action to widen choice, and action to reduce Government intervention'; a Europe committed to open, liberalized markets not protectionism; and a Europe committed to the maintenance of 'a sure defense through NATO'²

Shortly, the integration of Europe was thought to be a threat to all the moral, cultural, economical, social and religious values of the European nations. hence, the idea of Europeanism generated the public discourse many of the critics declared the formation of EU an idealistic approach while several called it foolish thought like, the great differences which existed within Europe, of political, cultural, economic practice and performance, and of culture and religion, lead some to conclude that talk of the idea of European unity is nothing but 'European culture babble.....certain imaginary images of Europe are being evoked in the flourish of Euro babble'³

End of Cold War and EU

Postwar, the Europe entered a new phase of disputes which were generated with the rise of communism in eastern and central Europe. The communism in influence of USSR had been spreading rapidly in Europe. The concept of communism is entirely different it had been discouraged the private sector and had been promoted a classless society which was totally under- control of government hence, all fundamental rights were vanished whereas, the ideology of European union is different than this, according to the preamble of the EU charter, the EU is founded on the indivisible, universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity, it is based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

During the period of rise of communism the USA supported Western Europe with heart and soul; it provided monetary support to western European states to prevent themselves from the spread of communism, the Marshall plan was especially designed for this purpose with more than 13 billion dollars. The alliance between USA and western European states had brought the world in to the cold war which had divided the world in to two halves. The western European states formed the organization of European

² Thatcher. The Downing street Years.(London. 1993) p726

³ Nedeveen, Pieterse, J.Europe among other Things: Closer, Culture, Identity, in :K, Von Benda- Beckmann and m.verkuyten, eds, Nationalism, Ethnicity and Cultural identity in Europe(Utrecht 1995)p81

economic Cooperation (OEEC) to utilize the aid in equal and constructive manner and in 1957 OEEC following the Treaty of Rome reformed by the formation of European economic Community (EEC) which later transformed into European Community and eventually following the Treaty of Maastricht the European Union came into being.

Consequently, with the fall of Nazi's in WWII, Germany had been split, this period is known as the period of division of Germany.

Germany had stripped of its war gains and lost territories in the east to Poland and Russia. The cold war polarized Germany between the Allies in the west and Soviets in the east.⁴ This situation was a threat particularly to Europe's prosperity and generally to the world's peace until and unless the revolution of 1989 marked the death knell of communism in Europe. As a result not only was Germany reunified in 1990, but soon, revolution spread to the Soviet Union itself. After surviving a hard-line coup attempt in 1991, Gorbachev was forced to cede power in Russia to Boris Yeltsin, who oversaw the dissolution of Soviet Union.⁵

With the dissolution of the USSR the capitalism spread over the communism not only in Europe, but in the whole world. The capitalism is contrast to communism it is that economic system which maintain the dominance of private owners and capital and production for profit.

European Union's Concept of European Integration

To understand the EU it is significant to understand the concept of European integration. There are several questions arise regarding this integration that whether it is federation or confederation, supranational or intergovernmental. Hence, the formation of EU which eventually became the reason of European integration is tried to analyze in substantial manner.

In the beginning of the postwar Europeans Project, two concepts emerged about how integration could be implemented: supranationalism and intergovernmentalism. With supranationalism, institutions and policies supersede the power of their national equivalents. The European Court of justice for example, could issue verdicts that nullify and supersede verdicts reached by national courts.

Inter-governmentalism in contrast minimizes the creation of new institutions and policies, and conducts European integration through cooperation between national governments. This approach is illustrated in the realm of foreign policy. The EU does not have a foreign minister or a secretary of state, as there is no EU foreign policy worth speaking of, unless all the member state governments agree on an issue.

⁴ History of Germany (1945-1990) From wikipedia, the free encyclopedia-
[www.http\en. wikipedia.org/wiki/history-of_germany-\(1945-1990\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/history-of_germany-(1945-1990))

⁵ fall of Communism.US Department of state future.state. gov/when/timeline/1969/détente/fall_of_communism.htm

In the case of the war in Iraq, the EU split into two camps, one supporting George W. Bush's military intervention and the other supporting continued inspections by the envoy of the United Nations Hans Blix.⁶

Hence, it could be said that the EU has both supranational and intergovernmental elements. It is the mixture of both of them. Simultaneously, neither it is a typical international organization nor it fits in either of two definitions of federation and confederation.

Federation

A group of states exercises the system of government in which several states form a unity but remain independent in internal affairs.

Confederation

A group of states joined in by an agreement or treaty in an alliance or union.

Future of European Integration and Role of European Union

European integration is most frequently associated with the period after the end of the Second World War, as western European states increasingly cooperated during various developmental stages of the EU. But the concept of governing Europe actually has a far longer history- from the Roman Empire of Julius Ceaser to Napoleon, Hitler and Stalin, European history is marked by many attempts to organize the multitude of nations and ethnicities into a more or less coherent political entity with competing views of how the different states should be related and the degree to which autonomy and sovereignty should be preserved. Nonetheless, though the concept of the EU, the most recent vehicle for organizing Europe, has to-date, been a highly successful attempt at integration.⁷

But, in the meantime there are few apprehensions exist regarding the European integration and the role of EU while discussing them we could analyze the future of EU and European integration as well.

▪ Can EU Balance The Global Power

With the dissolution of the USSR, the pan of physical balance had moved downwards in domination of USA. Today the USA calls itself to be the single global power but it is significant to keep balance in power and it ca be done by using the tool not other than EU. The EU has been playing pivotal role in strengthening integration among European states whether they belong from east, north, south or central. The integration of European community is actually the key of balance of global politics in presence of USA.

⁶ Staab, Andrew. The parameters of European Union.The European Union Explained, second edition, Part One. Chapter 1, p4

⁷ ibid

▪ **Status Can Be Settled**

Some politicians think that EU would be moved towards becoming a federation others think that future integration should be viewed with caution- for example Germans position has generally favored movement towards a federal EU while, the Britain are reluctant to cede more power to the EU and favor an intergovernmental EU.⁸

So, it is hopefully said that to avoid any complications the current members will earlier in future decide the future of EU.

▪ **Respect Of European Parliament**

The EU have one executive branch- the European commission-the council of the European union, whose members consist of one minister from each EU member country and the European Parliament which is directly elected by EU citizens. The EP is one of the major organs of the EU but unfortunately the EP does not command the same respect as a national parliament possesses. This question is very hot in Europeans that who possesses the decision- making power in EU either the EP or the Council of Ministers. It is a public demand that EP would have more powerful status which could strengthen the EU in future.

▪ **Consocialation Policy**

The EU has definitely been working hard to diffuse all kinds of differences found among Europeans but still a long way left for instance, in France there is great resentment about the dominance of English language and it is illegal to play too many English songs on radio because France favors assimilation (you are French or you are not?) whereas, Britain favors Laissez- faire policy means multiculturalism.

But, may be EU to safeguard its integration would have to adopt a middle way that is, the consocialationism policy. According to it a system sometimes proposed for societies with deep social, cultural, religious, racial or linguistic divisions. It involves governments by a coalition representing the different groups in that society. As much decision- making as possible delegated to the groups and minorities may be deliberately over- represented and presented by the power of veto.⁹ Hence, it is said that the EU could adopt such policy to maintain harmony and peace in the continent.

⁸ extension:is the EU a federation or confederation

[www.carelton.ca/ces/elearning/introduction/ what- is- the- eu/extension-is-the -eu-a federation-or-a-confederation](http://www.carelton.ca/ces/elearning/introduction/what-is-the-eu/extension-is-the-eu-a-federation-or-a-confederation)

⁹ Mc Cormick, S, John. The European Union: politics and policies- Introduction to regional integration, the new Europe Interdisciplinary Perspectives. Ed 2nd . west view Press 5500 Central Avenue boulder, Colorado 80301-2877, 12 Hid's Copse Road Cumner Hill, Oxford OX2911 p11

Conclusion

The Europe has seen many colors-now the Europeans are enjoying the color of LOVE. It can be said unanimously that all credit goes to one and only EU. The European Union is definitely a good representative body of Europe. Its global character can be seen at all levels especially in Europe, the integration of Europe is actually based on the principle of EU which is clearly written in its charter that democracy and rule of law are its key features.

The other regional organizations by adapting the footsteps of EU could enhance their role and provide relief to their people. SAARC is an example which was also formed to promote peace and harmony South Asia but it has not given any fruitful results until now.

In fact, peace and prosperity are significant for development of any region. The creation of EU proved that the national prestige could not be damaged by a collective identity-The Europeanism is example.