

Complex and split but unique and coordinated

EU mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Abstract

This thesis aims to give a deeper understanding of the European Union (EU) in international mediation by examining how the EU has practiced its mediation over time. Based on existing theories on international mediation and EU foreign policy, an analytical framework consisting of actorness, resources and mediation strategies has been developed. The framework has then been applied on three different EU mediation processes, in 1996-1997, 2008-2009 and 2014, in one of the most long-going cases of EU involvement: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The results show that in general, the EU has become a more united and coherent actor, both regarding internal and external coherence. Over time, the EU has had resources to use on both Israel and Palestine but has almost always been unwilling to use its resources to influence Israel. Regarding mediation strategies, the EU has over time favoured the least active strategy, communication-facilitation. During all mediation processes, and especially in 2008-2009, the EU also showed signs of the two more active mediation strategies. The thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of mediation, and although the results refer to the specific conflict, they may be applicable to other cases of EU mediation.

Key words: European Union, international mediation, Israeli-Palestinian conflict, actorness, resources, mediation strategy, coherence, Moratinos, Gaza war

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1 Introduction

As a peace project itself, international mediation has always been a central aspect for the European Union (EU). During the last 25 years, the Union has in various ways been involved in mediation processes all over the world (Sherriff et al. 2013), with an increase since the 2000s (Bergmann 2017). Among all the conflicts the EU has been involved in as mediator, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict stands for by far the most long-going (Persson 2018: 1) and is an extremely interesting case to study regarding mediation. During all the years of EU mediation worldwide, and with the increase in mediation activities, many developments have occurred within the EU's foreign policy and mediation. The Lisbon Treaty and the Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities from 2009 (referred to as the Concept) are two important examples of these developments (Council of the European Union 2009a; Panizza 2018).

Globally, mediation is the most commonly used conflict management tool (Siniver 2016:187) and in Bercovitch et al.'s (1991: 8) well-cited definition of mediation, a mediator can be either an individual, a state, a group or an organisation. The EU is a highly unique and complex actor that cannot easily be placed in this categorisation of a mediator. In the literature, the EU is both mentioned as a regional organisation and some kind of super state (Carlsnäs 2004; Hill & Smith 2011; Müller 2013: 21; White 2001: 19-21), which illustrates the EU's complexity. The Union's structural complexity with many different dimensions to consider has resulted in a problem with internal coordination and unity. The EU has often been criticised for not being able to speak with one voice and act as a united actor in foreign policy areas, including in mediation (Gebhard 2011: 102; Bäckstrand & Elgström 2013: 1374, 1378; Sherriff et al. 2013; Persson 2016: 42). The EU's actorness, originally defined as its behaviour in the international system (Sjöstedt 1977), is affected by its special composition, which makes it a highly interesting actor to examine in the context of mediation.

Due to its importance as an international actor in many different areas, an internal ambition and external expectation exist for the EU to use its resources to act in mediation situations (Council of the European Union 2009a: 2). However, the EU is sometimes described as an "economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm" in an international context (Whitney 1991). This questions what resources the EU as a complex actor has, and is willing to use in the context of mediation.

1.1 Purpose and research question

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to gain a deeper understanding of the EU as a mediating actor, and more specifically to examine EU mediation over time. This is of relevance and interest due to both the EU's complexity as a special actor and to its increasing involvement in international mediation. Against the background of the research problem and purpose, the thesis' research question is formulated as follows:

- How has the EU practiced its mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over time?

1.2 Previous research and theoretical point of departure

This thesis primarily draws on two major research fields: EU foreign policy and international mediation. The field of EU foreign policy studies is broad and include various areas (White 2001). One such area is the EU as a global conflict manager (Hill & Smith 2011; Whitman & Wolff 2012), while another is the EU's actorness in multilateral negotiations (Elgström & Jönsson 2005; van Schaik 2013). There also exists literature on Normative Power Europe (Manners 2002; Whitman 2011) and Ethical Power Europe (Aggestam 2008), where the former focuses on the EU as an actor promoting ideas, values and norms globally and the latter on the purposes and intensions behind the EU's exercise of power (Manners 2002; Aggestam 2008: 3). These different strands of research within the field of EU foreign policy studies provide valuable insights to the EU as an international actor and are useful for understanding the EU's complexity and uniqueness as a foreign policy actor.

Regarding international mediation, there is no consensus in the literature on one clear definition, but generally, it is distinguished by intervention of a third party in a dispute between conflicting parties to achieve a change. In addition, mediation is a non-violent and voluntary process, dependent on the acceptance of both the mediator and the parties of the conflict (Grieg & Diehl 2012: 2-3, 5-6). Some definitions also extend the basic definition and include the impartiality or neutrality of the mediator (Kochan & Jick 2011: 211; Young 1967: 81). This thesis follow Bercovitch et al.'s (1991: 8) often used definition of mediation as "a process of conflict management where disputants seek the assistance of, or accept an offer of help from, an individual, group, state, or organization to settle their conflict or resolve their differences without resorting to physical force or invoking the authority of law." This broad definition covers a wide range of mediation activities, both more inactive and active strategies (Grieg & Diehl 2012: 3-4) and

enables for including all the EU's mediation activities in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The field of international mediation is a well-researched area within peace and conflict studies, resulting in a broad literature. The complexity and broadness of mediation is illustrated in Bercovitch & Jackson's (2009) framework of the 'contingency model of mediation'. According to the framework, mediation outcomes are a result of both the process, such as timing, and contextual factors, including characteristics of the conflict, the mediator and the conflicting parties (Grieg & Diehl 2012: 117). Although the broadness, previous studies on mediation generally focus on the underlying conditions for effective or successful mediation (Bercovitch & Houston 2000: 170; Bergmann & Niemann 2015: 960). Noteworthy, very few studies focus on the EU in international mediation, this since the fields of peace and conflict studies and the EU's foreign policy studies to a large extent have not been combined. As a result, the EU as a mediating actor is relatively unexplored in the academic literature (Bergmann & Niemann 2015; Bergmann et al. 2018). Although some studies have started to fill this gap (Bergmann et al. 2018; Davis 2018; Natorski 2018), more research on EU as mediator is needed, which this thesis contributes to.

By combining literature and theories from the fields of EU foreign policy and international mediation, I have developed an analytical framework consisting of three fundamentals: actorness, resources and mediation strategies, which will be further elaborated in chapter 3. The combination of the two research fields and the development of the framework thus make this thesis unique, and it contributes to new insights on the EU as a mediating actor.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

In the next chapter, consisting of the thesis' method, methodological considerations such as research design, case selection and empirical material are discussed. In chapter 3, the theories and analytical framework of this thesis are described, and definitions and operationalisations are clarified. Thereafter, chapter 4 starts with a background to the EU's mediation and involvement in the conflict and continues with an analysis of each of the three mediation processes in chronological order. For each mediation process, actorness is first analysed through internal and external coherence followed by resources and mediation strategies, thereby following the structure of the analytical framework. Finally, in chapter 5, the results are discussed, and conclusions are drawn to answer the research question.

2 Method

2.1 Research design

To answer the research question, this thesis has been designed as a qualitative case study, also known as a single-N study (Halperin & Heath 2017: 153). Since the aim is to understand EU mediation rather than explain it, the thesis has a descriptive character. The primary advantage with the case study is that by examining a single case, in this case EU mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is possible to intensively examine and understand that case in-depth (ibid.: 214, 217). For the purpose of this thesis, a case study is therefore the best option.

A possible weakness when analysing a single case is the external validity and generalisability (ibid.: 154, 214, 217). Since the EU is a highly unique actor, all cases of EU studies are unique, and the generalisability is therefore a possible limitation in all research areas dealing with the EU, not just mediation. Based on my investigation of EU mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is thus difficult to draw any far-reaching generalisations that certainly will apply to other cases of EU mediation. However, this thesis can also say something about EU mediation in general since the findings might not be exclusively applicable to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but must be investigated and tested by further research on other cases of EU mediation.

2.2 Case selection

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a highly relevant and interesting case to study. The primary reasons for focusing on this specific conflict are threefold. Firstly, the conflict has for long been a key focus for EU cooperation and was one of the first issues collectively addressed by the Union nearly 50 years ago (Müller 2013: 20). Thereby, the conflict is of great importance for the EU, which makes it an interesting case to study. Secondly, the EU has always had a foreign policy ambition to act collectively in the conflict and a peaceful solution to the conflict has been a priority of fundamental interest since the 1970s (EEAS 2016a; Persson 2018: 1; Tocci 2007: 100). Finally, the EU has been consistently involved in the conflict for a very long time. This long-going involvement enables me to study

EU mediation over time, and therefore, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a suitable case to examine.

However, in this thesis, it is not possible to investigate the entire period of EU mediation in the conflict. Therefore, I have selected three different mediation processes to focus my research on. The delimitation to and the time period between these mediation processes enables me to examine EU mediation over time. Since mediation is extremely context dependent (Bercovitch & Rubin 1992; Greig & Diehl 2012) it is impossible to keep the situation in the different mediation processes constant. However, I am keeping the periods constant in the way that they all are in the same conflict.

The first period is the mediation process in 1996-1997, led by Ángel Moratinos. The second is the mediation process during the Gaza war on winter 2008-2009, known as Operation Cast Lead. Finally, the third is the mediation process in the 2014 Gaza war, also referred to as Operation Protective Edge. Due to the EU's role as a complementary mediator, it does not exist many periods when the EU directly has been mediating in the conflict. But during these three mediation processes it is possible to distinguish and examine EU mediation from that of other mediators (Musu 2010: 59-60; O'Donnell 2016: 14).

The reason that the first mediation process is in 1996-1997 is that the EU during this period became more actively engaged in the region and expressed a will to take on a more prominent role in the already existing peace process between Israel and Palestine (Musu 2010: 59-60). This period is therefore the first where a sufficient amount of material exists to examine EU mediation. The second period in 2008-2009 has been chosen since it is a while after the first period, but still before the possible effects the major changes that occurred in the EU's foreign policy and mediation in 2009 could have shown in practice. The last mediation process in 2014 has been selected since it is some years after the previous mentioned changes that might have affected the EU's mediation, but also because it was one of the last genuine attempts to mediate in the conflict (UI 2018).

2.3 Empirical material

The empirical material primarily consists of, on the one hand, material on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and, on the other hand, on the EU. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a well-researched area and as a result of the conflict's long-going character, a broad literature exist, whereas a prominent part focus on mediation (Aggestam 1999; Aggestam 2002; Aggestam, Persson & Strömbom 2014; Altunişik & Cuhadar 2010; Kriesberg 2001). However, most studies focus on the US's role as mediator in the conflict, while studies on the EU's concrete role as mediator in the conflict is very limited. The few studies that have investigated the EU's involvement and role as mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Elgström et al. 2018; Müller 2013; O'Donnell 2016) have not combined actorness, resources and mediation strategies. Instead, studies analysing the EU's

general involvement as a peace builder in the conflict are more common (Musu 2010; Persson 2016; Persson 2018; Tocci 2007).

Studies on the EU's concrete role as mediator in the conflict and information on exactly what has happened during mediation processes is limited. Nevertheless, it is possible to collect the information needed for this thesis by combining many different sources. The empirical material to a large extent consists of secondary sources such as academic books and peer-reviewed academic articles. In addition, information from the EU's official site, other reliable websites and some news articles are used. These sources are primarily used to complete academic books and articles about information on the EU and its mediation activities in the conflict. A few primary sources are also used, consisting of official EU documents and agreements. These sources are just as the other sources used to gather as much relevant and reliable information as possible.

By as far as possible comparing information from three independent sources, so-called triangulation (Höglund & Öberg 2011: 39), I reduce the risk for using biased or inaccurate information. If the information significantly differs from other sources, it is either expressed in the text or deselected.

2.4 Delimitation of the study

With regard to the limitations of time and scope of a thesis of this kind, several delimitations have been necessary. Regarding the delimitation of only investigating one case in form of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, reference is made to the previous account of the importance of in-depth analysis and the justification for the conflict as an interesting and relevant case. Similarly, the delimitation to focus on the three mediation processes has already been explained.

The broadness of mediation means that it is impossible to study all mediating aspects in the conflict. Therefore, the thesis has necessarily been delimited to exclusively analyse mediation through the three fundamentals in the analytical framework: actorness, resources and mediation strategies.

In addition, the fact that mediation is context dependent results in that various factors naturally affect the EU's mediation in the conflict, such as the conflict context, the conflicting parties and actions taken by other mediators. For example, the US's role as diplomatic hegemon and lead mediator in the conflict has implications for the EU, not least by a limited manoeuvring space for mediation activities (Siniver 2012: 82). However, as illustrated in both the purpose and research question, this thesis is only interested in analysing the EU as mediator in the conflict. As a natural consequence, no other factors or actors potentially affecting the EU's mediation are examined. When other mediators are mentioned, it is because it is relevant and necessary for analysing the EU's mediation.

3 Analytical framework

As earlier mentioned, the international mediation literature deals with various aspects of mediation and as such, many different theories exist. Similarly, the EU's foreign policy area is a broad field with various theories. A combination of theories from these research areas are highly interesting and relevant in this thesis.

To structure the research problem and to answer the research question, I have developed an analytical framework based on literature and existing theories on international mediation and EU foreign policy. The thesis therefore has a theory developing character. The analytical framework consists of three main fundamentals: actorness, resources and mediation strategies. These fundamentals are, as illustrated in Figure 1, interlinked. The disposal of resources is necessary to use any mediation strategy and the actorness decides whether and in what way the resources are used, thereby also affecting the strategy. Although the fundamentals are interlinked, they are, for the sake of clarity, examined separately in the three different mediation processes. This also enables for a high internal validity by making sure to measure exactly what should be measured in the study (Halperin & Heath 2017: 217). To make sure to systematically examine and measure the mediation processes in the same way, three guiding questions are set out that will be answered for all mediation processes: (1) How was the actorness in terms of internal and external coherence? (2) What resources were utilised, and how? (3) What mediation strategy or strategies were used?

By a clear operationalisation of the fundamentals and transparency in the research procedure, researchers can repeat the procedure of this thesis and likely get the same results (ibid.: 149, 173), thus upholding the reliability of the thesis.

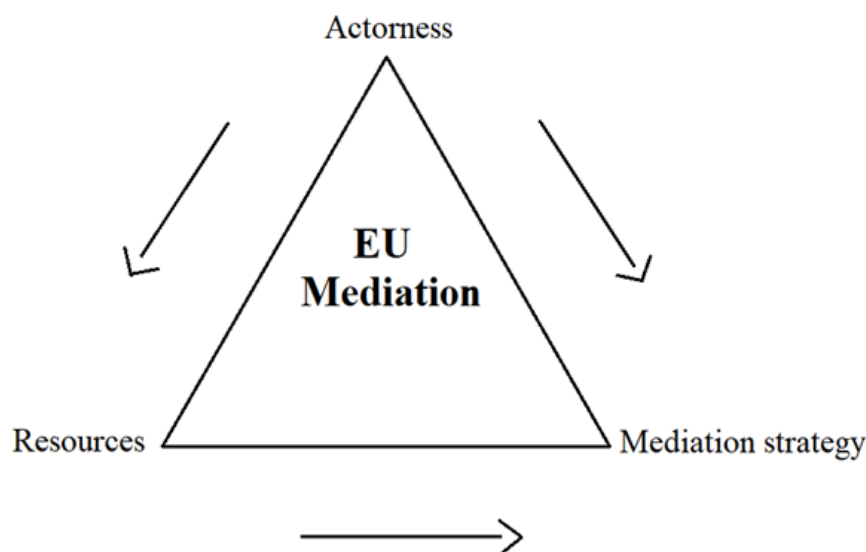


Figure 1. Summary of the analytical framework

3.1 Actorness

For decades, actorness has been a widely discussed and debated concept of importance for analysing the EU as a special and complex international actor (Klose 2018: 1144). In the literature on EU as mediator, actorness is often talked about as coherence, which is a concept that recurs in the literature (Bergmann & Niemann 2015; Coibion 2017; Chaban et al. 2019; Elgström et al. 2018; Thomas 2012).

There is no consensus in the literature on one clear definition of coherence since scholars focus on different aspects and dimension of the concept (Thomas 2012: 458-459), but it refers to the coordination between and within the EU's different layers and levels (Gebhard 2011). The concern with coherence is not specific for the EU, it is rather an aspect that all actors must engage with to a certain degree. What makes it more complicated for the EU is that it is not a united actor as for example a state is. Its specific and complex structural composition as an actor composed by different states and engaged on many different levels complicates its coordination. Since many different EU actors are involved in mediation processes, coherence is important at several levels (Gebhard 2011: 102, 107; Bergmann & Niemann 2015: 962-963).

In the Concept from 2009, coherence is one of several guiding principles for mediation, where it is expressed that mediation initiatives should be guided by policy coherence (Council of the European Union 2009a: 6). As such, coherence is not just an important concept in the literature on the EU as mediator, but also for the EU itself.

The conceptualisation and operationalisation of actorness in this thesis will focus on two different aspects of coherence. It draws inspiration from Gebhard (2011) who emphasises four dimensions of coherence: vertical; horizontal; internal; external, and Müller (2013) who identifies three aspects: cohesion; horizontal coordination; EU autonomy. Although different names, all the dimensions are either internal or external. This thesis therefore focuses on one internal and one external dimension, referred to as internal coherence and external coherence. Internal coherence is relevant to include when analysing EU actorness since the EU and its member states for a long time have struggled to act united, coordinated and to speak with one voice (Gebhard 2011; Sherriff et al. 2013). External coherence has relevance due to the importance of the EU's cooperation with third actors in the conflict, this since the EU as earlier mentioned is not a single mediator in the conflict. Therefore, this aspect is crucial to include to understand EU actorness in the conflict.

3.1.1 Internal coherence

Internal coherence, sometimes referred to as cohesion (Gebhard 2011: 103; Müller 2013), refers to the coordination between the member states and the EU. It is defined as “the concertation of member-state positions and policies with and in

respect of the overall consensus or common position at the Community or Union level” (Gebhard 2011: 107). With other words, internal coherence is “the ability of the EU and its member states to aggregate their preferences and to produce common objectives, positions and actions on international issues” (Müller 2013: 22). Indicators of internal coherence are the development of common positions and coordinated and united action. For the EU to be able to adopt a common position and action, convergence among the different member states’ foreign policy positions is necessary (Müller 2013: 22; Siniver 2012: 86).

The operationalisation of internal coherence, and thereby indirectly actorness, is possible by examining the EU and its member states’ position to the conflict and the mediation process, as well as the actions taken during the mediation process itself. This enables me to investigate how the internal coherence was during the three periods of EU mediation. Internal coherence will be examined at the time of the different mediation processes: 1996-1997, 2008-2009 and 2014.

3.1.2 External coherence

External coherence is defined as the coordination and cooperation between the EU and third actors (Gebhard 2011: 107), in this case with other mediators in the conflict. External coherence is determined by the coordination existing within and between the EU and its member states and consequently by the internal coherence. This since coordination among the EU and its member states is crucial for the EU to in turn be able to cooperate and coordinate with other mediators (ibid.: 108-109). Internal and external coherence are thereby interrelated.

The operationalisation of external coherence, and thus indirectly actorness, is possible by examining the EU’s coordination and cooperation with other mediators, in this case with the US and Egypt. This enables me to investigate how the EU’s cooperation and coordination with other mediators were during the three mediation processes. Just as internal coherence, external coherence will be examined in 1996-1997, 2008-2009 and 2014.

3.2 Resources

A mediator’s resources, or bases of power, are part of the nature of the mediator, and the access to resources are determined by the mediator’s interests and positions (Bercovitch & Houston 2000: 179-180). A mediators’ resources are central to exercise any leverage over parties in a dispute and to change, or at least affect, the situation (Bercovitch & Rubin 1992: 19). Some kind of resources are therefore a precondition to act as mediator. As expressed by Kleiboer (1996: 371), there exist a wide range of resources for a mediator to use. Resources can for example be of economic, political or military kind (Whitney 1991). In addition, resources can be categorised as material or immaterial, where the former is more direct such as economic trade agreements or military missions, while the latter is

more diffuse and for example include prestige (Pfetsch 2007: 152). On a more specific level, six types of resources can be identified based on French & Raven's (1959) conceptualisation of social influence: coercion, reward, referent, legitimacy, expertise and information.

A wide variety of resources are thereby essential in the mediation literature, but in this thesis, it is neither possible nor relevant to include all the resources that exist. Therefore, the focus is on material resources, that are more direct and easier to distinguish than immaterial resources. Out of the six previously mentioned resources identified by French & Raven, I focus on coercion and reward since these resources are often mentioned and easily distinguishable in the mediation literature. Coercion is referred to as sticks or negative sanctions, while reward is referred to as carrots or positive sanctions (Touval & Zartman 1985; Kleiboer 1996; Bergmann & Niemann 2015). Coercion includes different forms of threat and coercive measures from the mediator, for example threats to withdraw the mediation, economic sanctions or even military intervention. Reward means that the mediator offers compensations and advantages to the parties, for example by direct economic compensation, beneficial economic policies towards the parties or by including beneficial deals in the proposed agreement (Beardsley et al. 2006: 64-65; Bercovitch & Rubin 1992: 20; Touval & Zartman 1985: 13).

Resources are operationalised by examining what kind of material resources the EU utilised during the mediation processes, and how these resources were used. The operationalisation of the EU's resources is made at the time of the different mediation processes: 1996-1997, 2008-2009 and 2014.

3.3 Mediation strategies

A mediator's access to and usage of its resources decide what mediation strategy that can be used, and the choice of strategy is therefore based on the resources the mediator has to its disposal (Bercovitch & Rubin 1992: 17-19). There exist various typologies of mediation strategies, but Touval & Zartman's (1985) classification of mediation strategies is one of the most prominent and most used (Bercovitch & Rubin 1992: 16-17). Based on their ideal types, three mediation strategies can be identified: communication-facilitation, formulation and manipulation (Beardsley et al. 2006), ranging from a less to more active role for the mediator.

Communication-facilitation is the least active mediation strategy and can include everything from assisting with a place for the parties to meet to a more complex role of communicating messages. The mediator functions as a channel of communication between the conflicting parties and passes on information between them. The focus of the mediator is to ensure a continuation of dialogue and discussion between the parties. To do this, the mediator makes sure that the parties have access to all important and necessary information to best estimate outcomes that both parties can agree upon. In addition, the mediator can provide information to the parties that it has gathered independently to elucidate

misunderstandings. No matter what tactics the mediator uses, no significant contribution to the mediation process is made and no proposals are put forward (Bercovitch & Rubin 1992: 17-18; Beardsley et al. 2006: 63).

Formulation is a more active mediation strategy where the mediator takes control over the mediation process and decides its structure. By deciding the structure, the mediator can put focus on specific conflictual issues and thereby control the process. Besides, the mediator formulates and proposes different solutions to the conflict (Touval & Zartman 1985). A mediator adopting this strategy is often well suited to solve negotiations that have reached a stalemate by convincing the disputants to consider, and sometimes also accept, solutions to the conflict. Often, the parties can be convinced that mediation is more beneficial than no mediation, this by stressing what benefits the parties can gain from the mediation process (Beardsley et al. 2006: 63-64).

The most active mediation strategy is manipulation. It has the same characteristics as the formulation strategy, but in addition, the mediator directly influences the mediation structure and process through its resources, leverage and position (Touval & Zartman 1985). The mediator uses coercive measures but can also provide positive incentives (Bergmann & Niemann 2015: 962). A mediator adopting this strategy can increase the immediate costs of a continued conflict but also the future costs of not complying to an agreement. Regarding the immediate costs, the mediator can use its resources as either carrots or sticks. Carrots can be offered to stop fighting and by including benefits in the proposed solution it increases the chance that the parties accept the agreement. Some examples of carrots are direct economic compensation, favourable economic policies, association agreements or other diplomatic compromises. By using sticks, the mediator can increase the costs of not reaching and accepting an agreement. Examples of sticks are diplomatic or economic sanctions, threat of not upgrading agreements and threat of military intervention (Beardsley et al. 2006: 64-65; Bergman & Niemann 2015: 962; Greig & Diehl 2012: 9, 118).

As noted by Beardsley et al. (2006: 65), the different mediation strategies partly overlap. For a manipulative mediator to be able to entice the parties with carrots and threat with sticks, the mediator needs to bring the conflicting parties together by using the facilitation strategy and structure the mediation process as a formulator. As such, facilitation is always used in some way, while manipulation is rarely used without the formulation strategy.

Mediation strategies are operationalised by examining which strategy or strategies the EU used as a result of its resources. The operationalisation of the EU's mediation strategies is made at the time of the different mediation processes: 1996-1997, 2008-2009 and 2014.

4 EU mediation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict

4.1 A historical background

The history of today's EU started in 1952, when six European countries created a common market for, and free movement of, coal and steel: the European Coal and Steel Community. The primary aim with the cooperation was to prevent arms race to secure the peace in Europe after the Second World War. Since then, the EU has evolved a lot and at the time consists of 28 member states (Sveriges Riksdag n.d.; EUR-Lex 2017).

The Middle East and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have always been of great interest for Europe. The EU's involvement in the conflict begun in 1970 with the formation of the European Political Cooperation (EPC) (Persson 2018: 1; Tocci 2007: 100). As emphasised by Persson (2018: 1), "This makes the Israeli-Palestinian conflict one of the longest, sustained cases of active EU involvement in world politics". The EPC was the synonym for EU foreign policy coordination until it was replaced by the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 (Müller 2013: 22). The aim of the EPC was to maximise the EU's influence in international affairs, this through a united and coherent EU approach (Office for Official Publications of the European Communities 1998: 5).

The Venice Declaration from 1980 is a milestone of European policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and is still largely seen as valid for the EU's current position to the conflict. The declaration emphasised the Palestinian's right to self-determination, the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the legitimate representant for the Palestinian people in peace negotiations and the denunciation of Israeli settlements on occupied territory (Musu 2010: 30, 40, 123; Siniver 2012: 81). In the 2009 European Security Strategy, the importance of the EU's involvement in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was further illustrated when a resolution of the conflict was described as a strategic priority and one of the keys for managing other problems in the region (Council of the European Union 2009b: 36).

The EU's long-going involvement in the conflict has resulted in an establishment of close relations with both Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA). The EU has had a special historical relationship with Israel since the establishment of the state in 1948 and as early as in 1964, the EU's contractual

ties with Israel begun with the signing of the first trade agreement between the parties. Since then, the ties have gradually developed and strengthened through many agreements and include areas such as technical and scientific cooperation, social and cultural collaborations and free trade agreements (Bouris 2014; Siniver 2012: 84). The fact that “Israel is the only non-EU country to enjoy full access to the EU’s Framework Programs for Research and Technological Development” (Bouris 2014), clearly illustrates the close relationship. Although the close relations, Israel favours US mediation and has generally tried to downplay the role of the EU in the peace process (ibid.). For the PA, the EU has together with its member states for long been its largest donor. In addition, the Occupied Palestinian Territories have over the last decade received most aid per capita from European donors (Youngs 2014) and is thus dependent on European aid. In contrast to Israel, the PA has called for a greater EU involvement in the peace process (Tocci 2007: 115).

Regarding mediation, it is part of the EU’s preventive diplomacy and a tool for peacebuilding and conflict prevention (EEAS 2017). As earlier mentioned, the two most recent developments relating to EU mediation is the Lisbon Treaty and the Concept from 2009. The Lisbon Treaty, that entered into force in December 2009, is the latest step for the evolution of the CFSP and sets the rules for EU cooperation. With the treaty, major developments occurred within the EU’s foreign policy. It introduced a High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, who is also Vice President of the European Commission (HR/VP), sometimes referred to as an EU Foreign Minister. The HR/VP shall represent the EU in matters relating to the CFSP and express the EU’s position internationally. In addition, a non-rotating President of the European Council (EC) was created. Importantly, the treaty also established the European External Action Service (EEAS), an EU diplomatic service (Müller 2013: 22; Whitman & Juncos 2009). The Concept illustrates a more systematic, strategic and coordinated approach to mediation and in the document, a plan on how to enhance the EU’s mediation capacities to play a more active role internationally is formulated. In addition, the need for improved internal coordination and closer cooperation with other actors are expressed (Council of the European Union 2009a: 2; Bergmann 2017), thereby relating to both internal and external coherence.

4.2 1996-1997: the mediation process led by Moratinos

4.2.1 Actorness: messy internal but good external coherence

Starting with internal coherence, there was during most of the 1990s an internal division on how much the EU should engage in the already existing Israeli-

Palestinian peace process. On the one hand, France advocated for EU co-sponsorship in the peace process. On the other hand, member states such as Germany and the United Kingdom held the opinion that the EU should not interfere with the US' role as lead mediator (Müller 2013: 26). As such, the member states were widely divided on the position to the conflict. However, the EU started to become more actively engaged in the region in general and expressed a will to play a more prominent role alongside the US in the Israeli-Palestinian mediation process (Aggestam 1999: 206; Musu 2010: 59-60; Soetendorp 2002: 289).

As a direct consequence of this, Mr Miguel Ángel Moratinos was appointed as the first EU Special Envoy (now Special Representative) to the Middle East Peace Process in November 1996. As a single interlocutor for dealing with the regional parties, Moratinos' primary tasks were to improve the coordination between the EU member states and reduce the problem of inconsistency with a rotating EU presidency (Musu 2010: 46, 60, 95-96; Soetendorp 2002: 289). This was no easy task since the EU's diplomatic response to the Lebanon crisis just some months before Moratinos' appointment was widely divided. During the crisis, France acted unilaterally and did neither coordinate its actions with the EU nor consult the other member states, clearly revealing the difficulties the EU had to speak with one voice towards the region (Müller 2013: 27; Musu 2010: 59). Another illustration of the European disunity was the British Foreign Minister Rifkind's proposal in November 1996 to establish an OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) forum for the Middle East regional security (Alpher 1998: 81).

The lack of unity and coordination among the EU and its member states towards the Middle East also continued during the mediation process itself. This was one of the most obvious constraints for Moratinos and his mandate in the peace process (*ibid.*). Consequently, Moratinos found it difficult to take on an active role in the negotiations during the mediation process. This even though he was directly involved in many stages of the peace negotiations during 1996-1997 and earned both respect and trust of all the parties involved (Musu 2010: 95-96). The disunity among the member states thereby made it impossible for the EU to act in a coordinated and united manner.

Turning to external coherence, the EU's enhanced role as mediator in the peace process resulted in that the Union directly tried to influence events through different initiatives, some of them coordinated with the US (*ibid.*: 59). However, all European attempts were not coordinated with, or well received by the US. In October 1996, just one month before Moratinos' appointment as Special Envoy, the French President Chirac travelled to the region. In a speech, he proposed that the EU, just like the US and Russia, should become a co-sponsor of the peace process. In addition, he expressed that an increased French and EU engagement would be beneficial in restoring the confidence in the peace process. Chirac's tour and speech were neither welcomed nor appreciated by the US (*ibid.*: 60), and independent EU initiatives like this illustrates the problems the EU had with coordination and cooperation with the Americans.

Even though the EU was internally divided, Moratinos still managed to establish contacts during the period. In keeping with his broad mandate as Special Envoy, he established and maintained close contacts with important international organisations, regional actors and international actors, including the US, in the mediation process (Zafar 2014: 87; Soetendorp 2002: 289). Moratinos cooperated with, and became a valuable partner to Dennis Ross, the American Special Envoy. Moratinos assisted Ross by helping him mediate political agreements between Israel and the Palestinians, which was possible due to the EU's leverage over the Palestinians (Soetendorp 2002: 289). Thereby, the American and European cooperation was necessary to influence both parties to reach an agreement.

During the peace negotiations leading up to the signing of the Hebron Protocol in January 1997, Moratinos played a complementary, but very important, role to that of the US (Dieckhoff 2005: 56). He assisted in bridging the gap between Palestine and Israel since the EU focused more on Palestine, while the US concentrated on Israel. As such, a division of labour occurred between the US and the EU. Moratinos also cooperated with the Americans when he assisted them to encourage the President of the PA, Yasser Arafat, to sign the Hebron Protocol. The US and the EU further cooperated on a coordinated attempt to avert a Palestinian declaration of independence when they tried to convince Arafat to postpone the declaration (Soetendorp 2002: 280-291). These examples illustrate Moratinos' and the EU's ability to cooperate with other mediators, in this case the US.

To summarise, the EU managed to complement the US in a relatively coordinated way, although the Union's internal lack of coordination and unity towards the conflict in the period. This was likely facilitated by the appointment of Moratinos as the first Special Envoy to the region. Moratinos managed to establish and maintain close contacts to the US and Ross although divided EU positions, and Moratinos' relationship with the US was necessary to facilitate coordination and cooperation. Thanks to Moratinos efforts in the period, the EU could therefore coordinate and cooperate with the US in the mediation process. However, a more internal united EU would have been better suited to complement and coordinate with the US since the Union and Moratinos were constrained due to this lack of EU coordination.

4.2.2 Resources

In the period, the EU had become the most important financier and the largest donor to the PA, and as a result, the Palestinians became very dependent on economic aid from the EU. The EU's economic resources thereby gave the Union power to use its economic leverage to influence the PA and its policies (Soetendorp 2002: 289-290). By using its economic leverage, the EU engaged in every aspect of state-building in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. By building Palestinian institutions, the EU hoped that a Palestinian state would be established (Bouris 2014). Much of the economic and technical assistance to the PA was provided through the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) framework, today

called UfM. The EMP was launched in 1995 and was then one of the EU's most promising foreign policy initiatives, establishing political and economic cooperation with initially 12 states in the Mediterranean, including with the PA in 1997 (Müller 2013: 27-28; Youngs 2015).

The EU constitutes Israel's first and most important trade and import partner, as well as its second biggest export partner, after the US (Bouris 2014; Persson 2018: 2). As a result, the relations were strong between the parties during the mediation process. Through the EMP initiative, concluded with Israel in 1995, the strong relations between the EU and Israel were further deepened by strengthening the already existing commercial and political relations (Müller 2013: 27-28; Youngs 2015). The strong economic and political relations with Israel meant that the Union had a potential leverage over Israel.

Through Moratinos, the EU was able to use its resources to affect the PA during the mediation process, which was not the case with Israel. The earlier mentioned occasions when Moratinos in cooperation with the US encouraged Arafat to sign the Hebron Protocol and convinced him to postpone the declaration of Palestinian independence are examples of the EU's usage of its leverage over the PA. The EU's economic resources and the Palestinians' dependence on these resources made it possible for Moratinos and the EU to influence the PA during the mediation process. However, no such influence existed over Israel. Although the EU's strong relationship with Israel the Union was neither able nor willing to use its economic leverage to influence Israel in the peace process. But as earlier mentioned, since the EU concentrated on the PA and the US on Israel, it is neither unexpected nor strange that the EU focused on using its leverage over the PA.

4.2.3 Mediation strategies

Various mediation strategies can be identified during the mediation process, but to a large extent, Moratinos and the EU used the communication-facilitation strategy. Many characteristics from the strategy were seen in Moratinos' behaviour. He functioned as a channel of communication between Israel and the PA since he passed on information between the parties, and in that way ensured continued dialogue and discussion (Dieckhoff 2005: 56; Soetendorp 2002: 289-290). In this way Moratinos managed to keep the parties engaged in the peace process (Zafar 2014: 87), which was possible due to the close contacts Moratinos had established with both parties.

In addition, the EU showed signs of a formulation strategy, since Moratinos not only communicated with the parties, but also actively proposed solutions to the conflict (Dieckhoff 2005: 56). This illustrates that the EU and Moratinos went beyond the most inactive form of mediation strategy, something that was possible due to an active role from Moratinos that helped the EU to play a bigger role in the peace process. However, the EU did not show any clear signs of a manipulative strategy during the mediation process.

4.3 2008-2009: the mediation process during the Gaza war of 2008-2009

4.3.1 Actorness: splitted internal and hurt external coherence

Regarding internal coherence, the EU and its member states had during this period increasingly converged around the position to complement the US in the peace process (Müller 2013: 29). The EU's first reaction to the Gaza war in winter 2008-2009, also known as Israel's Operation Cast Lead, was to mobilise movement in its three instruments in the conflict: contractual relations, assistance and diplomacy (Tocci 2009a: 55). Although the initial response to the war was united, the Union failed to maintain a coordinated response and was unable to speak with one voice (Bouris 2014; Siniver 2012: 86). The position to the war itself was widely divided among the European member states. France was very critical of the Israeli operation, while the Czech Republic and Italy held a far friendlier approach towards Israel. They underlined that the operation was of a defensive character and instead blamed the Palestinian Islamic group Hamas that won the Palestinian election in 2006, for the escalation of violence. The United Kingdom held a third position and tried to achieve a ceasefire by exercising diplomatic pressure on Israel (Milton-Edwards 2007; Musu 2010: 78-79; Siniver 2012: 86; Tocci 2009a: 56). These divided positions clearly exemplify the European struggle to reach a common position and to act in a united manner.

Throughout the war, the rotating EU presidency shifted from France to the Czech Republic, two states that as recently mentioned held very different positions to the war. Besides, the French president Sarkozy refused to decrease his mediation activities in the conflict and thought that the Czech Republic was not fit to take on the challenge from France (Müller 2013: 29). This not just illustrates a struggle for the EU to reach a common position and present itself as a united actor, but also a clear and expressed internal EU disunity.

In the beginning of January 2009, the European disunity became even more obvious when three different European delegations visited the region. The first delegation was led by Sarkozy. The second delegation was represented by the EU Troika, consisting of, at time, the previous, the sitting and the next EU Presidency: French Foreign Minister Kouchner, Czech Foreign Minister Schwarzenberg and Swedish Foreign Minister Bildt. In addition, High Representative Solana and External Relations Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner were also part of the Troika. Finally, the third delegation was led by Moratinos, the Spanish Foreign Minister. Although the aim of all of the delegations was to end the violence, reduce humanitarian suffering and discuss EU ceasefire proposals, the presence of three delegations in the region at the same time made it difficult for the parties in the conflict to know what delegation that actually represented the EU (Tocci 2009a: 58, 72). Besides, the EU Troika was split itself,

consisting of many different individuals with different positions to the war, most notably the French and Czech Foreign Ministers.

With focus on the external coherence, the US' absence during Operation Cast Lead in 2008-2009 meant that the EU, and mostly France, took the initiative to play a more prominent role in the mediation process (O'Donnell 2016: 14). However, this was not appreciated by the absent US. Firstly, the US did not accept that any other third parties, as the EU, pushed aside Egypt in its role as mediator (International Crisis Group 2009: 44). Secondly, the Americans actively restrained efforts taken by other actors to directly halt Israel's operation, which the EU aimed to do (Crumley 2009; O'Donnell 2016: 14). This was something that Sarkozy strongly disliked, and in addition, he was angered by the American decision to block a UN resolution that demanded an immediate end to the fighting (Crumley 2009). Based on these events, the tension between the EU and the US was high and both coordination and cooperation fell to a low point.

Although the internal disunity among the member states, the EU expressed a common support for the mediation efforts taken by Egypt to end the hostilities (Council of the European Union 2009c). But the expectation that the EU, through France, could take on a more prominent role in ending the war caused tension with Egypt, who did not want any other actor to supplant their mediating role (International Crisis Group 2009: 44). The active involvement of the EU and France to mediate during the operation to an extent interfered with and irritated Egypt, thereby hurting the cooperation between the two mediators (O'Donnell 2016: 14). While the EU's and France's active role in the mediation process resulted in a strained relationship and low cooperation and coordination with Egypt, the parties still managed to cooperate and coordinate to some extent. The ceasefires that were brokered occurred due to mediation activities by Egypt and the EU, that both were crucial players in facilitating dialogue to end the war (ibid).

To sum up, the lack of coordination and a common position among the EU and its member states both regarding the conflict and the mediation process made it difficult to cooperate and coordinate with other mediators. Although the EU expressed common support for Egypt, this unity did not show in practice, due to the obvious lack of internal coordination. However, to an extent, the EU managed to cooperate and coordinate with Egypt since both actors were crucial in ending the hostilities. The fact that the EU did not have a Special Representative to the region at the time and that the rotating presidency shifted during the operation made coordination more difficult both within the Union and with other mediators. Although France took on the most active role, the fact that many different EU actors were involved in, and visited the region, further complicated the coordination and unity.

4.3.2 Resources

The EU's economic resources were strong also in this period and the Union still had strong relational ties with both the PA and Israel. In 2009, the EU was the

largest donor to the PA, as well as to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) (O'Donnell 2016: 10). Thereby, the Palestinians were still dependent on EU support and aid, which gave the EU a leverage over the PA. Besides, the EU continued to be Israel's largest market, thus resulting in an Israeli dependence on the EU and its market. This fact gave the EU a potential leverage vis-à-vis Israel (Tocci 2009b: 390). But, in contrast to the relationship with Palestine, Israel was also an important trade partner for the EU and its member states (Miller 2006: 656), thereby decreasing the economic leverage that the EU had over Israel. Another fact that limited the EU's influence and use of its resources over Israel is that Israel as a developed country does not have the right to financial assistance from the EU (Tocci 2009b: 395), which differentiates it from other countries in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The result of Israel's non-eligibility for assistance is that the EU could not use the ENP as leverage over Israel, something the Union could over the PA (O'Donnell 2016: 12). The EU had more resources to use as leverage over the Palestinians than over the Israelis, and was also more willing to use its resources over the PA.

Except economic resources, the EU disposed other resources, for example different security resources. One such example is the European Union Coordinating Office for Palestinian Police Support (EUPOL-COPPS) mission that was established in 2006 and ongoing during the Gaza war of 2008-2009 (Altunişik 2008: 113). Although the different kinds of resources the EU had, the Union was often not able to use the resources well due to the many different EU actors engaged in the mediation process (O'Donnell 2016: 10, 14). The EU's failure to coordinate its action and reach a common position thereby made it difficult to use its resources in a coordinated and favourable way.

4.3.3 Mediation strategies

The EU used different mediation strategies during the mediation process in 2008-2009. The EU, mostly through France, was active in the mediation process and begun talks with the PA and Israel (O'Donnell 2016: 9, 13), which is an example of the communication-facilitation strategy. But the EU's existing policy of no contact with Hamas (EEAS 2016b) meant that the Union could not communicate with all parties in the mediation process, which constrained its mediation. Due to the no-contact policy, the communication aspect of the communication-facilitation strategy was not fully achieved.

In addition to facilitate mediation, the EU also showed signs of both a formulation and manipulation strategy. By presenting proposals for a ceasefire (Black & McCarthy 2009), France took on a formulating role and was an important actor in the mediation process. The EU also used coercive measures during the mediation process, which is typical for the manipulative strategy. The EU put pressure on Israel and more directly affected the mediation process by threatening to not upgrade its relations with Israel through a developed Action Plan within the ENP, if the Israel did not engage in negotiations with the

Palestinians (Musu 2010: 135; Müller 2012: 64). The EU also fulfilled its threat and after the war, the meeting discussing EU-Israel relations was first postponed and when it came about, did not lead to a new and developed Action Plan (Musu 2010: 135). In addition, during several months, the EU stopped meetings with Israel regarding technical issues. The coercive measures used during the mediation process are examples of the EU using its economic resources and leverage to influence the peace process more directly. It was also one of the first times that the Union really put pressure on and used conditionality against Israel (Müller 2012: 65). Another sign of a manipulative strategy is that the EU used its resources as reward to influence the parties to reach an agreement. This by showing its willingness to, in cooperation with Egypt, the PA and Israel, re-deploy its Border Assistance Mission at the Rafah Crossing Point (EUBAM Rafah), which was active 2005-2007 (Tocci 2009a: 55; EEAS 2016c). However, due to the no-contact policy with Hamas, this reward and manipulative strategy could only be used vis-à-vis Israel (O'Donnell 2016: 13).

Although the mediation process was one of the first times the EU used conditionality vis-à-vis Israel, the EU-Israel relations continued and were further deepened through other agreements between the parties. For example, in the end of 2009, the parties signed an agricultural agreement (Müller 2012: 65). This shows that the measures taken by the EU to put pressure on Israel did not affect other aspects of the strong relationship between the parties and therefore it can be questioned whether the measures were effective.

4.4 2014: the mediation process during the 2014 Gaza war

4.4.1 Actorness: good internal and frictionless external coherence

Regarding internal coherence, several changes had occurred within the EU through the 2009 Lisbon Treaty and Concept in the period leading up to the 2014 Gaza war, known as Operation Protective Edge. At the time when the Israeli army launched the military operation, the EU had no Special Representative to the region, which limited the EU's ability to deliver a coordinated and united initial response among different EU actors (Carnegie Europe 2014; O'Donnell 2016: 14-16). Nevertheless, the EU could unite around the fact to end the violence and the human suffering. In addition, the EU were united in condemning the firing of rockets into Israel by Hamas (President of the European Council 2014; Council of the European Union 2014a).

The establishment of the EEAS with the Lisbon Treaty resulted in increased coordination and coherency within the EU. As an obvious example of the increased internal coherence, multiple delegations did not travel to the region in

2014 (O'Donnell 2016: 16, 19-20) and thereby the EU presented itself as a more united actor. Besides, the change from a rotating presidency to a non-rotating President of the EC meant that a single person was responsible during the whole period, since the presidency did not change from different member states. This further facilitated a more united and coordinated EU approach.

Even though the many changes and developments resulting from the Lisbon Treaty improved internal EU coordination and unity, the EU still faced challenges with inconsistency between the member states in 2014 (ibid.: 16-17). For example, Germany held and holds a friendlier position towards Israel than France (Musu 2010: 23, 90), much due to the history and the German special responsibility for Israel's security (Federal Foreign Office 2019). The support of the member states is key when the EU engages in mediation activities but cannot be guaranteed due to the different priorities and positions amongst the member states, which do not automatically solve as a result of the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty (Sherriff 2012: 29).

Turning to external coherence, also in this mediation process, Egypt was the lead mediator. The EU welcomed the Egyptian efforts to mediate during the war and expressed its full support for Egypt (Council of the European Union 2014a: 2; Council of the European Union 2014b). The EU cooperated with Egypt by supporting and assisting the Egyptians during the mediation process. In addition, the EU stated it "stands ready, including through the reactivation of the EUBAM Rafah mission, if conditions allow, to contribute to a comprehensive and sustainable solution [...]" (Council of the European Union 2014a: 3). In this way contributing to the Egyptian mediation, the EU coordinated its actions and resources with Egypt during the mediation process.

The coordination and cooperation with other mediators were facilitated by the increased internal cooperation within the EU post Lisbon. The creation of the EEAS resulted in one clear contact point within the Union (O' Donnell 2016: 19), which made it easier to cooperate and coordinate with other third parties, such as Egypt and the US. The fact that no multitude of delegations travelled to the region further illustrates a coordinated EU approach, facilitating coordination and cooperation with other mediators. Another aspect that favoured cooperation and coordination was the fact that the EU mostly acted as a supporting mediator in the process, thereby not threatening other mediators by a strong EU presence in the mediation process (ibid.: 20).

As a secondary player in the mediation process, the EU was often kept out of the negotiations, which made the Union unable to cooperate and coordinate with Egypt on all matters. Another limitation to the EU's cooperation and coordination with Egypt was that during crises, it is difficult to pass on information (ibid.: 19). In this aspect, the communication and coordination between the EU and Egypt was sometimes limited.

In sum, the EU's increased internal coordination also resulted in an increased external coordination and cooperation with other mediators, most notably Egypt. The developments that occurred in 2009 with the Treaty and the Concept improved the EU's ability to act as a more united actor in the mediation process in 2014, thereby also facilitating cooperation with Egypt. However, the coordination

and cooperation with Egypt were not only possible due to developments within the EU. The fact that the Union only complemented Egypt and not took on a more active role also facilitated the cooperation since the EU did not interfere so much with the Egyptian mediation.

4.4.2 Resources

In the mediation process in 2014, the EU's resources continued to be important in relation to both parties in the conflict. The EU was still the largest donor to the PA and still had close relational ties to Israel, also continuing to be its largest trade partner (Carnegie Europe 2014). Besides, EUPOL-COPPS was still active in the region and the EU was able to re-deploy EUBAM Rafah (O'Donnell 2016: 15; Carnegie Europe 2014). These facts illustrate that the EU had several different resources to use as leverage during the mediation process.

Due to the internal developments within the EU, the Union was able to use its resources in a coordinated way. With the support of the EEAS, the High Representative (HR) became less dependent on the member states and their diplomatic and administrative resources (Müller 2013: 31). But at the same time, this meant that the HR did not have access to the same national resources as the rotating presidency had (O'Donnell 2016: 18), in a way limiting the overall EU resources. No matter the pros and cons with the HR respectively a rotating presidency, the EU was relatively coordinated and united in its usage of its disposed resources, much due to the decreased number of actors involved in the mediation process.

Nevertheless, the EU was in fact unwilling to use many of its resources to put pressure on the PA and Israel. One illustration of this is that the Union criticised the PA's governance but did not use conditionality against the PA by for example decrease or cut the financial assistance. Another example is that the EU did not do much to threaten or sanction Israel for its attacks on Gaza. The only measure that was taken was that some individual member states stopped the export of arms to Israel (Youngs 2014). These events illustrate that the EU did not use its resources as leverage on the parties during the mediation process.

4.4.3 Mediation strategies

During the mediation process, the EU used a communication-facilitation strategy. It facilitated mediation by both supporting the Egyptian mediation and by being more directly involved when assisting in reaching a ceasefire (O'Donnell 2016: 17). The EU also communicated with and facilitated dialogue between the parties. However, due to the continued policy of no contact with Hamas (Youngs 2014), the EU could still not engage in communication with all parties and the communication side of the strategy was thus not fully achieved.

The EU barely showed any signs of the two more active mediation strategies during this mediation process, although it had resources it could have used to take

on a more active mediation strategy. However, one example of a more active strategy is that the EU again was willing to re-deploy EUBAM Rafah in collaboration with Egypt, the PA and Israel (Carnegie Europe 2014), which is a sign of a reward and thus a part of a manipulative strategy. Yet, this reward was not enough to influence the parties to reach a ceasefire during the mediation process and although the EUBAM Rafah was a good resource itself (O'Donnell 2016: 16), it was not good enough as leverage. Thereby, it cannot be argued that the EU used a manipulative strategy during the mediation process, but rather that the Union tried to use one aspect of a manipulative strategy but failed.

5 Conclusion

By applying the analytical framework of actorness, resources and mediation strategies on the three mediation processes, I have been able to answer the research question of this thesis. An examination of the three different mediation processes has showed that the EU has practiced its mediation in the conflict in various ways over time, and some clear results have been found.

To start with, the EU has become a more coordinated and united actor, both regarding its position to the conflict, mediation process and actions during the mediation process. As such, the internal coherence has improved. Although some inconsistencies between member states persist, and always will persist, the increased coordination and unity within the EU has been clearly seen in the three mediation processes. To exemplify, in the first mediation process in 1996-1997, the disunity was obvious due to widely diverging positions of the member states, while there was still a clear and expressed division during 2008-2009 when different delegations went to the region. But in the last mediation process in 2014, no such obvious disunity was expressed. During this mediation process, EU mediation was more coordinated, structured and institutionalised, probably due to the developments, such as the establishment of the EEAS, resulting from the Concept and Lisbon Treaty from 2009. However, it is possible that an internal division existed during all mediation processes, but that the developments facilitated for the EU to improve its ability to deal with these inconsistencies and present itself as a more united mediator.

Because of the improved internal coherence, the external coherence has also increased, since a more coordinated EU has generally been better suited to cooperate and coordinate with other mediators. However, the empirical findings also show that during the first period when Moratinos mediated, coordination and cooperation with other mediators still existed although the EU struggled to adopt a common position and act united. This implies the importance that individuals can have on the EU's mediation, and that internal and external coherence do not always match.

Another finding is that during all the mediation processes, the EU has had close relational ties with both the PA and Israel, especially economically through trade and aid. Over time, the relational ties have also been strengthened through various agreements with both parties. Because of the close ties, the EU has always had resources to its disposal, in particular economic, that could function as leverage over the parties. However, a clear pattern is that in all mediation processes, these resources have almost exclusively been used as leverage over the PA, while the Union has been unwilling to use its resources as direct leverage over Israel. Although an exception occurred during the mediation process in 2008-2009 when the EU used its resources as leverage by not renewing the Action Plan

with Israel, all other EU-Israel relations continued as usual, thereby with limited consequences of the measure. The EU's unwillingness to use conditionality against Israel must be seen in the light of history, where the EU, and especially Germany, feels a responsibility for the security of Israel. But no matter the reasons for not using conditionality against Israel, the special historical relationship has over time been a limitation for the EU to act as mediator in the conflict, since it constrains its measures against Israel.

A third result is that during all mediation processes, the most widely used mediation strategy was the communication-facilitation strategy. This shows that the EU over time has persisted in using the least active mediation strategy which implies that it generally favours a role focusing on dialogue and communication over more active and interventionist strategies. Although communication-facilitation has been the most used strategy, the EU also showed signs of more active strategies during all mediation processes. However, no clear pattern can be seen over time. In 1996-1997, the EU showed signs of the formulation strategy, in 2008-2009 of both formulation and manipulation and in 2014 only one small sign of manipulation, that can barely be seen as using the strategy. This illustrates that although the EU has had similar resources over time, the resources have been used in different ways, thus resulting in signs of different mediation strategies. Since the EU only on a few occasions and to a limited extent used its resources to directly influence the parties and change the mediation structure, this implies that the EU often shies away from adopting a totally manipulative strategy.

By examining the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over time, this thesis has achieved its aim of gaining a deeper understanding of the EU as a mediating actor. Although it is only the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that has been examined, the findings of how the EU has practiced its mediation in the conflict over time can say something about EU mediation more generally. However, we still need to know more about the EU as mediator and whether, and what, findings that are applicable to other cases of EU mediation. This thesis enables for future research, that could focus on several different areas. Firstly, the analytical framework of this thesis needs to be further investigated, and future studies could apply the framework on other cases of EU mediation. Secondly, researchers could use the framework to compare several different cases of EU mediation, for example non-European with European cases, and thereby shed light on possible differences and similarities. Finally, comparing the EU's mediation with that of other complex actors, for example a regional organisation such as the African Union, might result in a better understanding on what is specific for EU mediation.

Although one of the longest cases of EU involvement, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is yet to be resolved. The EU's complexity and internal split has resulted in difficulties for its mediation activities and the Union's own limitations have sometimes been to its disadvantage as mediator in the conflict. But importantly, the EU has as a unique and increasingly coordinated actor also strengths that have been advantageous for its mediation in the conflict.

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