

Title: Why Locals Cannot Own International Interventions: Evidence from the EU Mission in the Horn of Africa

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Abstract: In recent years, there has been a fundamental shift in the discourse of international interventions as locals are increasingly expected to assume ownership. The EU has also endorsed this principle in its peacebuilding efforts. While existing studies show that achieving ownership has been one of the most difficult challenges facing peacebuilders, we still do not fully understand why these problems persist. Drawing on Governmentality Studies and reflecting on 33 interviews with decision-makers involved in EU missions, I argue that locals do not assume ownership because of three inter-connected reasons. First, the principle of ownership is based on the political rationality of interveners instead of locals. Second, ownership is operationalized as responsabilization for externally designed objectives. Finally, this gives rise to local resistances that undermine international efforts to achieve ownership. I illustrate my arguments with evidence from the EU Capacity Building Mission in the Horn of Africa.

Keywords: local ownership, peacebuilding, interventions, governmentality, EU missions.

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Among countless IR neologisms that have mushroomed in the post-Cold War period, local ownership has a pride of place. While local the precise meaning of ownership is contested, it is always based on a premise that international support to peace is only viable if it relies on a certain degree of local capacity and participation. Since the turn of the century, it has become one of the guiding principles of international support to peace and security. Virtually all international organizations as well as major aid agencies, think tanks, and NGOs involved in international support to peace and security went on to adopt the principle of ownership as “the gold standard of successful peace and statebuilding” (Dursun-Ozkanca and Crossley-Frolick, 2012, p. 251). The EU has been at the forefront of this trend by endorsing ownership across its external policies and even declaring it to be a principle “inherent in the European approach to international relations” (EU, 2008, p. 3).

As it has been discussed in the Introduction to this Special Issue, the local ownership principle has been one of the central themes of the ‘local turn’ in peacebuilding (Donais, 2012; Mac Ginty, 2015). The vast majority of studies, however, have documented serious challenges in the implementation of ownership. The UN, which pioneered the concept, has failed to match its rhetoric on ownership with its peacebuilding practice (Billerbeck, 2016, p. 4). While ownership is one of the least studied aspects of CSDP interventions (Ginsberg and Penksa 2012, p. 108, Zarembo 2017. p. 4), the existing research clearly suggests that the EU has also struggled to live up to this principle in its CSDP interventions (Grevi *et al.* 2009, Tolksdorf 2014; Merlingen 2011; Vandemoortele 2012, p. 207; Rayroux and Wilén 2014; Freire and Simão 2013, p. 467; Ginsberg and Penksa 2012, p. 116).

Why locals do not assume ownership over international interventions? Some scholars blame international peacebuilders and their focus on stability (Billerbeck, 2015, 2016), imposition of Western norms (Oosterveld and Galand, 2012, p. 167), lack of contextual knowledge (Sending, 2009), foreign ways of thinking (Autesserre, 2014, p. 98), or poor donor coordination (Mackenzie-Smith, 2015). Others posit that the key obstacles to ownership are domestic insecurity (Scheye and Peake, 2008), weak local capacities (Chesterman, 2007), lack of consensus among locals (Thiessen, 2013, 2016), absence of political will among domestic elites (Gordon, 2014 p. 128), or even their preference for external imposition (Krogstad, 2014). However, we still do not fully understand how international and local agencies are connected in

preventing higher degrees of local ownership. A fuller understanding of the local ownership principle in peacebuilding requires a theoretical framework that can encompass not only international and local agencies but also structural and agentic aspects of this problematique.

To fill this gap, in this article I draw on Governmentality Studies and literatures on peacebuilding and CSDP. Moreover, I analyze EU policy documents but also documents issued by states hosting CSDP missions and I reflect on interviews conducted with EU policy makers, CSDP staff and their local counterparts. My main argument is that insufficient local ownership is so common in international interventions for three interlinked reasons. First, although narrated in liberal idioms, the ownership principle is based on the political rationality of interveners instead of locals. In other words, it is a form of (post) colonial governmentality, characterized by a combination of liberal and disciplinary power, used by strong liberal states to govern weak and illiberal ones. Second, ownership is operationalized as a supply-driven responsabilization of locals for externally designed objectives. Finally, this alien governmentality gives rise to local resistance that ultimately undermines international efforts to achieve local ownership. These insights shed light on previously unexplored relationship between local ownership and local resistance, two themes that this Special Issue focuses on.

While my arguments are shaped on the basis of a larger pool of 117 interviews that covered several CSDP missions, due to space limitations in this article I explicitly draw on 33 interviews conducted in Brussels (June 2016) and in Somalia/Somaliland (November 2016) with different stakeholders involved with the The European Union Mission on Regional Maritime Capacity Building in the Horn of Africa (EUCAP Nestor).¹ The mission is chosen in this article as an illustration because not only because it has been struggling to achieve local ownership (House of Commons 2015, p. 89) but also because like most other CSDP interventions launched so far, it is a non-executive civilian mission in Africa. It is true that the mission is also different from other CSDP interventions most importantly because it was the first regional mission of the EU and the first one to deal with maritime capacity building. Still, while the degree of local ownership certainly varies from one intervention to another, I posit that the challenges described in this article and illustrated in the case of EUCAP Nestor are common to most (if not all) international interventions because they stem from the very political rationality of local ownership as an international practice.

The article proceeds in the following order: in the first section I briefly discuss how local ownership has been analyzed within Governmentality Studies and what contribution I intend to make to this body of knowledge. In the second section I discuss the political rationality of local ownership. The third section outlines techniques used to operationalize local ownership while the fourth section analyses various forms of resistance that all this gives rise to. In conclusion, I discuss implications of the arguments advanced in the article and suggest some ideas for further research.

Governmentality studies and local ownership

Governmentality, a term first coined by Michel Foucault (Foucault, 2007 p. 108), in the broadest possible sense denotes any historic form of rationality of rule. In the narrower sense, governmentality means an ensemble of liberal discourses and practices aimed to govern indirectly, beyond the immediate reach of the state. To distinguish between the two meanings, in this article the term ‘governmentality’ will be used to denote any rationality of rule, while ‘liberal governmentality’ will be used for liberal rationality of government.

Foucault’s ideas on governmentality inspired a wider field of Governmentality Studies (Osborne, Rose, and Barry, 1996). In recent years, the field of IR has experienced a veritable “Foucauldian turn” of its own (Kiersey and Stokes, 2013, p. xvi). While none of these works look at the local ownership principle in world politics in a systematic manner, many of them characterize this as a form of quintessentially liberal governmentality. Neumann and Sending, for example, hold that the local ownership principle reflects liberal transformation of world politics (Neumann and Sending, 2010, p. 144). Similarly, Jacqueline Best contends that: “the emerging discourse of ownership [...] feeds into a conception of self-responsibility that greatly resembles a Foucauldian logic of self-government” (Best, 2007, p. 96; see also Kurki 2011).

These analyses reveal fascinating similarities between domestic liberalism, which evolved over the centuries, and the recent local ownership principle in international interventions. Nevertheless, there is more to local ownership than mere policy statements. Local ownership also produces a specific form of knowledge, structures practices and constitutes sites of intervention in a way that might vaguely resemble domestic liberalism, but is also reminiscent of colonial and disciplinary practices. In fact, as will seen below, the local ownership is only narrated in liberal idioms while in practice it retains strong elements of sovereign and

disciplinary forms of power. To take the liberal policy idioms for granted means not only to accept security policies of powerful Western states at face value but also to inadvertently reinforce the hegemonic liberal account of world politics. As Selby aptly points out, when “scaled up to inform analyses of the current world order, Foucault’s work becomes less an interrogation of liberalism than a prop to reworked liberal accounts of the international arena” (Selby, 2007, p. 326).

Some authors have critiqued ownership as an essentially illiberal practice. Oliver Richmond, for example, argues that ownership is “illiberal, distant governmentality which is likely to be resisted because it undermines political autonomy, legitimacy and identity” (Richmond, 2012, p. 371). Richmond holds that this resistance nevertheless holds a “potential for a postcolonial form of peace [...]” (Chandler and Richmond, 2015, p. 6). Chandler is less optimistic and argues that ownership is an unsalvageable governmental technology of postliberalism, to which the West regressed after the failure of early post-Cold War experiment to export its modes of political and economic governance (Chandler, 2010; Chandler and Richmond, 2015). Richmond and Chandler offer a valid critique of the dominant understanding of local ownership created within the hegemonic liberal policy discourse. However, they stopped short of providing a systematic analysis of local ownership, which would capture both liberal and disciplinary features of ownership, both international and local agency involved, and both structural and agentic aspects of the equation, which is the goal of the rest of this article.

To that end, I first analyze the political rationality of local ownership, or the way it is reasoned. Then I discuss the political technology of local ownership, which refers to the way this principle is operationalized. Finally, I examine different forms of local resistance to ownership.

Political rationality of local ownership

Political rationality is “the reasoned way of governing best and, at the same time, reflection on the best possible way of governing” (Foucault, 2008, p. 2). Its aim is not only to legitimize, but also to render reality governable. One of Foucault’s central preoccupations was the emergence of a liberal rationality of government in Europe. This liberal political rationality, Foucault holds, gradually gained pre-eminence over other direct forms of power such as discipline and

sovereignty (Foucault, 2007, pp. 108-109). While sovereignty and discipline are forms of direct power that rest on the rationality of the ruler, liberal governmentality is a form of power that is exercised indirectly. Most importantly, it is not based on the rationality of the state, or *raison d'état*, but on the rationality of the governed population. For Foucault, the advent of liberalism implies a shift from the rationality of a sovereign to the rationality of the governed. "This", he writes, "is what characterises liberal rationality: how to model government, the art of government, how to [found] the principle of rationalization of the art of government on the rational behaviour of those who are governed" (Foucault, 2008, p. 312).

The local ownership principle is indeed coated in liberal idioms such as self-determination, sovereignty, participation, partnership, and cooperation (Chesterman, 2007, p. 20; Shinoda, 2015 p. 20; Billerbeck, 2015, p. 299). The EU Council, for instance, defines ownership in CSDP interventions as "the appropriation by the local authorities of the commonly agreed objectives and principles" (EU, 2005, p. 11). Metaphors that are used to depict ownership also have a strong liberal string attached. For example, peacebuilders often argue that "the locals should be in the driving seat" which implies liberal values of autonomy and self-rule. In addition to this, by framing international peacebuilding as a consensual exchange based on international supply and a local demand, the language of "ownership", "buy in" and "demand-driven reforms", clearly refers to notions of economic liberalism.

However, the political rationality of the local ownership principle in international interventions is markedly different from the political rationality of domestic liberalism studied by Foucault. In contrast to liberalism at home, which emerged organically based on the political rationality of governed populations, local ownership in international peacebuilding is based on the political rationality of interveners. Its origins are, therefore, not to be sought (or not only) "in the French Revolution and its ideal of national self-determination" (Shinoda, 2015, p. 20). The association of local ownership with sovereignty and self-determination is part of a settled policy narrative that naturalizes this principle as inherent to the liberal international order. My goal here is to disrupt this official script and genealogically trace the origins of the local ownership principle back to the colonial rule.

While the term itself is a post-Cold War invention, the logic of local ownership, however, can be situated in a wider grid of political rationality of indirect colonial rule, which harks back

further into the past (cf. Wilén, 2009, p. 340). In some way, every imperial enterprise, especially when the control is weak and outposts are far from the metropole, relies on some form of indirect rule through “allegiances with local powers” (Barkawi, 2011, p. 601). But from the mid-19th century onwards, the colonial rule shifted from what was predominantly direct to an indirect rule. The process was kick started with the Indian Mutiny in 1857, which revealed the limits of an ambition to Westernize India, the consequence of which the colonial rule shifted “from rejuvenating to conserving society” (Mamdani, 1996, p. 49).

The indirect rule, as a model of governance perfected by the British in India was later applied in the Equatorial Africa. Lord Frederick Lugard, one of the architects of British colonial rule in Africa, captures well the logic and the know-how of an indirect rule. For him “the first step” of every indirect rule “is to endeavor to find a man of influence as chief, and to group under him as many villages or districts as possible, to teach him to delegate powers, and to take an interest in his ‘Native Treasury’ to support his authority, and to inculcate a sense of responsibility” (Mamdani, 1996, p. 53). Somaliland, for example, which the British held as a protectorate from 1884 until 1961, was also governed through an indirect rule by empowering clan leadership and keeping a light footprint on the coastline (Prunier, 1998, p. 225).

Even after decolonization, the logic of indirect rule over the volatile post-imperial penumbra continued unabated. The old imperial system of indirect rule, as Barry Hindess remarks, “has been superseded by a less direct system in which the inhabitants of the old imperial domains are governed through sovereign states of their own [...]” (Hindess, 2005, p. 409). During the Cold War superpowers competed indirectly through local proxies to avoid the risks of a direct clash. Their missions of advice and support in the field of defense and security, for example, as Barkawi writes, “echoed the early period of European expansion and that of military assistance to native allies, in which the Europeans could not exercise direct control but had to rely more on persuasion and bargaining with local elites” (Barkawi, 2011, p. 603).

The end of bipolarity brought about a sea change in the world order. Emboldened by their victory over the Soviet Union and world communism, developed democracies embarked on yet another civilizing mission to shape the developing world in their own image (Paris, 2002). When the limitations of the liberal peace started to emerge, and particularly after 9/11, the Western interventions have been increasingly framed as actions driven by self-interests rather than by the

welfare of others (Long, 2006, p. 213). One graphic example of this discursive shift is a stark contrast between the earlier EU crisis management interventions that aimed to build liberal states in Bosnia and Kosovo, and more recent training missions in Africa and Middle East with the primary goal to counter local or regional insurgencies by proxy (Olsen, 2014; Turner, 2015).

It was in this context of decline of the liberal hybris that the local ownership principle was translated from the field of development (OECD, 1995, p. 1) into an idiom of peacebuilding in the early 2000s. Ever since, it has been ritually justified in policy statements as the best way to sustainability, but also as a shield against the charge of neo-colonialism (Chesterman, 2007, p. 9; Wilén, 2009 p. 341). The principle does emphasize the importance of the local knowledge for sustainability of interventions (OECD, 2007, p. 58). However, this emphasis hasn't destabilized a wider epistemological hierarchy of liberal peacebuilding in which interventions are designed according to universal knowledge on how to construct liberal states or build liberal peace while the contextual knowledge serves a subordinate role of easing the implementation (Sending, 2009; De Coning, 2013).

Ownership has quickly become one of the key principles underpinning all external policies of the EU including development (EU, 2006b), enlargement (EU, 2002, p. 101), neighborhood (EU, 2015b, p. 2), conflict prevention (EU 2001, p. 10), and crisis management (EU, 2005; EU, 2006a; EU, 2016c). Akin to other peacebuilders, the EU has justified the principle on pragmatic grounds, as a way to sustainability (EU, 2015a, p. 8). In the words of an official from the European External Action Service (EEAS) who participated in drafting key strategic documents in the field of crisis management: "For me, it's not a principle that is important in and of itself, because it stems from sovereignty. I don't care about it. It's important because of its practical effects and because there is no sustainability without local ownership" (Interview 12). The practical effects, however, are evaluated first and foremost from the point of view of interveners, as an affect on their interest or image. As one EU crisis management planner put it: "Behind the local ownership principle there is a fear that the EU is going to be seen as a colonialist power. It gives the EU the shape of support rather than imposing" (Interview 11).

The emphasis on local ownership in CSDP interventions hasn't changed the epistemological primacy of universal over contextual knowledge deeply ingrained in the liberal peace doctrine. Thus, virtually all seconded and contracted CSDP personnel are functional experts, such as

maritime advisors, prosecutors or policemen, while area experts are rarely recruited and usually for auxiliary roles. Moreover, in the words of an EU official from the European Security and Defense College, pre-deployment trainings usually contain a passing reference to the local context. In most part, these trainings “are quite generic. They hammer down the principles, EU views and what do we mean by Security Sector Reforms” (Interview 19). Once deployed, staff members need a lot of time to familiarize with their local environments.

The political rationality of the ownership principle in EUCAP Nestor has been following the same logic. After pirate attacks on the commercial vessels in the Gulf of Aden peaked in 2008, thus incurring great costs for the European shipping industries and insurance companies, the EU was under strong pressure to do something (Interview 33). In December 2008, the EU deployed a naval counter-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia (EUNAVFOR Atalanta). A few years later, it became increasingly clear that the root causes of piracy lied onshore, so the EU launched EUCAP Nestor as an exit strategy of EUNAVFOR Atalanta (Interview 81) and a solution to the problem of piracy “from A to Z.” (Interview 36). These two missions were not deployed, as one EU diplomat put it, “because it makes us feel good or because it saves lives. We are doing it because it became too expensive to send ships through the Somali Basin and the Gulf of Aden and that’s it” (Interview 109).

If the rationale of launching EUCAP Nestor is to protect EU interests in the Horn of Africa, the rationale of achieving ownership in this mission has been to turn the locals into the vehicle of reaching these strategic objectives. In other words, the effort of EUCAP Nestor to achieve ownership is not driven by EU’s attachment to Somali sovereignty or self-determination, as one would expect judging by the policy discourse. The rationale behind this effort is to ensure sustainability of reforms needed from the point of view of European interests (Interview 80). Local knowledge is treated as relevant but subordinate to the universal, or to be more precise Western knowledge. EUCAP Nestor is thus almost exclusively staffed by functional experts with little contextual knowledge. As one Somali who works with EUCAP Nestor put it: “By the time they get the local context, they have to leave the mission.” (Interview 90). Therefore, in the words of another Somali who worked closely with the mission, “it’s better to have an idiot who understands how the local society works than to send people with three degrees in astrophysics who don’t know the local context” (Interview 84).

Most Somalis believe that illegal fishing is the driver of piracy. Their resentment towards illegal fishing vessels, many of which belong to EU companies, often extend to international community's presence in counter-piracy operations (Kerins 2016). Even those who belong to the educated elite and know more about the role of the EU than the public, are often disillusioned about the true motivations behind the EU mission. Echoing what many locals believe, one Somali associate of the mission, is convinced that "Piracy was a response to illegal fishing conducted by large Europeans boats" (Interview 98). He further argues that the EU has been reluctant to offer the knowledge and capacities to Somalis to effectively patrol their waters and board ships because of anxiety that this could be used by pirates: "It's a terribly dishonest system and one of the ways that system can work is that you have to keep Somalis away from protecting their waters [...] This shows total reluctance to transfer to Somalis any form of substantial local ownership of maritime security even within their own territorial waters" (Interview 98).

To sum up, despite the liberal language used to articulate local ownership, the political rationality behind it, with roots in the late colonial indirect rule, is driven by the pragmatic concern of the EU (and the West more broadly) on how best to govern the rest. To interpret local ownership as an instance of the global spread of liberal norms only perpetuates the liberal smokescreen that conceals the colonial origins of the principle and the continued power asymmetry it is constitutive of. In the next section I analyze the ramifications of such a political rationality of local ownership on the way it is operationalized and implemented in practice.

Political technology of local ownership

Political technology is a material aspect of governmentality and "refers to the practices and devices through which political rationalities are operationalized and implemented in actual governance programmes and activities" (Merlingen, 2011a, p. 153). In this section I show that the central technology of local ownership is *responsibilization*. The concept of responsibilization was not explicitly coined by Foucault but emerged within the larger field of Governmentality Studies (Barry et. al, 1996; Biebricher, 2011; Shamir 2008). Biebricher defines it as a "technique that turns individuals into subjects that consider themselves as free and responsible for their own actions as well as the respective outcomes" (Biebricher, 2011, p. 471). Under neoliberalism, individuals are aggressively responsibilized as customers, employees or credit-card users (among

other) and called to bear the consequences for their own actions. As they become responsabilized to make their own decisions, they are also left without the protection of their increasingly scaled-back states. Despite occasional resistance, domestic responsabilization in liberal societies “works”, as it effectively produces “free and responsible” subjects thus allowing the neoliberal logic to roll back the state.

In world politics, responsabilization also implies a process of producing states that can take care of themselves (Löwenheim, 2008). Responsibilization across borders, however, is not entirely analogous to domestic responsabilization within liberal societies. Domestic responsabilization implies an organic process that redefines relationships between citizens and their states in a democratic polity. International responsabilization is different in that it involves an attempt to impose a political rationality developed within one polity to shape the behavior of another. Domestic responsabilization is directed towards populations so that the state can step back and society can self-regulate. In international responsabilization, states do not step back. On the contrary, they are at the center stage of the process in which strong states try to responsabilize weak ones for the implementation of objectives that are not of their own making.

As a result, responsabilization across borders, especially when targeting conflict-affected states with little or no resemblance to liberal democracies, is less successful than domestic one in producing the desired outcomes (Joseph 2012, p.17). The attempt to govern such states through freedom resembles, as Joseph puts it, “what Foucauldians would call ‘disciplinary power’ rather than fully fledged liberal governmentality” (2010, p. 225). While more coercive and disciplinary models of external security governance usually make space over time to less direct mechanisms of persuasion and socialization (Schröder et al, 2012), representatives of weak states always know that in case of severe non-compliance they might have their “sovereignty licenses revoked by the international community” (Neumann and Sending, 2010, p. 177).

In CSDP missions, the EU routinely operationalizes local ownership as a responsabilization of locals so that they can implement externally designed objectives. It is used, as Merlingen points out, “to socialise locals into their way of thinking and to persuade them to accept the proposed reforms as in their own best interest and thus to implement them effectively” (Merlingen, 2011b, p. 205). The local ownership principle allows the EU to keep the power of deciding about the objectives of interventions without having to bear the responsibility for their

outcomes (Interview 43). The EU and its member states decide when, how, and to what end they will intervene. Locals, on the other hand, are expected to internalize objectives of interventions, so that implementation is successful and its results sustainable. Local ownership, as one EUCAP Nestor member put it is “a test to see whether the locals are ready to assume responsibility for this and if we are on the right track” (Interview 80).

In CSDP missions, the political technology of responsabilization is implemented through techniques such as mentoring, monitoring, evaluation, benchmarking, peer-review, training, advising, embedding, co-location, twinning, capacity building, needs assessment, gap analysis, key leader engagement, joint planning and programming etc. Very often, these techniques overlap each other and have variable names. Governmentality scholars have, already studied some of these techniques. In his analysis of EUPM in Bosnia, for example, Michael Merlingen shows how mentors mobilize the authority of their allegedly superior western knowledge to inculcate a sense of responsibility among the local professionals to narrow the gap (Merlingen, 2011a; cf. İşleyen 2017). Due to space constraints, I will here only discuss three exemplary techniques of local ownership to illustrate how the political technology of responsabilization shape everyday practices in the case of EUCAP Nestor.

The first one is *needs assessment*. Fact-finding and technical assessment missions precede every CSDP missions. Needs assessment starts in this early phase and continues throughout the lifecycle of the mission. However, both fact-finding and technical assessment missions are often short and cursory exercises that only consider views of the top echelons in host states. Consequently, they struggle to take on board the views of wider administrations, which are usually the target of CSDP interventions. Moreover, CSDP planners routinely ignore sentiments vis-à-vis the proposed mission of wider segments of society. Over time, as the feedback from the ground accumulates, CSDP missions recalibrate in order to transform the local needs into a vehicle of fulfilling the mission mandate and protecting EU’s interests. However, the locals needs remain an instrument and not an end, as long as the EU missions remain locked in their strategic rationality.

EUCAP Nestor is a good case in point. It was launched in July 2012, with the aim of assisting states in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean to build their counter-piracy capacities. It took the EU five years to realize that countering piracy is not a priority of the

countries in the Horn of Africa. The EU, therefore, decided in 2015 to phase the mission out of the region and focus on Somalia only, where the problem of piracy originated. Furthermore, the mission has broadened its hitherto exclusive focus on piracy to also cover issues such as illegal fishing, arms smuggling, human trafficking and illegal waste dumping (Interviews 74). As one member state delegate in the Political Security Committee (PSC) put it, now after so many years the EU:

talk(s) to the Somalis about these maritime security issues that are relevant for them, how can we build a legal framework that will allow them to make permits for fishing and make money out of it and how we help them enforce these laws and legislation so that as they do that, they also take away the space for the pirates (Interview 25).

The second exemplary technique of responsabilization is *engaging local leaders*. There is a striking similarity between the previously quoted Lugar's advice on the first steps of any indirect colonial rule and OECD's instructions on how to start working on the local buy-in:

The first step is to lay out a specific plan, with clear time lines and success indicators, that identifies the various local actors who will be involved in programme design and implementation, their roles and responsibilities, how they will be engaged, and what will be achieved through their engagement (OECD, 2007, p. 64).

In CSDP missions, local leaders are engaged in many ways. One of the EU's recommendations on local ownership based on the lessons learned exercise, for instance, was that "the EEAS should invite key political leaders of host countries to Brussels for face-to-face encounters with the PSC to raise the profile of CSDP missions and to underline the importance of political accountability" (EU, 2015a, p. 9). To fulfill this recommendation, as one EU official explains, "the president of the Central African Republic came to Brussels, talked to the PSC, there were a number of high profile contacts, and we raised the profile of the mission, so we ticked the box there" (Interview 15). Member states' delegates in the PSC sometimes visit host states and meet with local leaders. Counterparts that they meet, as one PSC delegate recalls, "tell you what you want to hear [...] that the mission should still be there because for them it's a political signal that they can show that are willing to change, so the mission should be prolonged and that they will work, blah, blah, blah" (Interview 36). Finally, to ensure the local buy-in,

CSDP missions' staff engages local leaders on a more regular basis through what is often referred to as "focal" or "entry points".

In Somalia for example, EUCAP Nestor engages in "key leader engagement" (KLE). The term was borrowed from counter-insurgency doctrines where it denotes "an area where commanders have an opportunity to change the behavior of those with the greatest influence over the population" (UK, 2009, p.6-7). On several occasions, for example, KLEs took place on board of ships deployed off the coast of Somalia as part of EUNAVFOR Atalanta. As one EUCAP Nestor advisor explains, "the aim of KLEs is to have a common understanding and to share information about mutual projects, activities, and plans, but also to show our presence and commitment [...]" (Interview 88). Local counterparts, on the other hand, see KLEs as an attempt of the EU to impress the locals but also as a useful opportunity to communicate their needs and raise their personal or institutional profiles (Interview 76, 91).

Another usual technique used to responsabilize the locals to *joint planning*. While in some cases the EU might operate only based on a Resolution of the UN Security Council, EU Council decisions and a formal invitation by host countries, most of the missions also conclude agreements regulating diplomatic status of missions (SOMA) and operations (SOFA) (DCAF, 2016, p. 13). However, in some missions, the EU signs with host governments joint action plans and compact agreements. To oversee the implementation of these documents, the EU and host states then often establish joint monitoring and evaluation bodies. The policy rhetoric construes these instruments as tools for negotiating mutually agreed objectives and activities. In practice, however, joint planning and programming serve to further socialize locals into the governance networks aimed to responsabilize them for the implementation of externally devised objectives.

The way joint planning functioned in EUCAP Nestor is an illustrative case in point. The mission agreed with the Government of Somaliland that the "overarching priority" was "to develop a common and agreed starting point for the desired Somaliland Coast Guard 'Capability Target'" (Cooperation Agreement, 2014, p. 3). In the Joint Action Plan (JAP) the two sides further "agreed" that the target achievement was the "Limited Initial Operational Capability" (LIOC) by the end of 2016 (EU, 2014, p. 1). The JAP, states that the process of achieving the LIOC was "demand driven" and that it follows a "bottom-up" approach which means that its objectives are "aligned with Somaliland's Vision" and "National Development plans [...]"

(Ibid). Based on this early “success”, EUCAP Nestor Strategic Review from March 2015, portrayed the JAP “as a model for the Missions future support to other Somali services involved in coastal and maritime law enforcement” (EU, 2015c, p. 12).

Despite these rhetorical commitments, the EU was firmly in control of the entire process. The EU presented both the draft and the methodology to the locals and they were more than happy with that. As one EUCAP Nestor official recalls: “They were themselves not able to make additions, not only because of limitations in their command of English language but also due to their inability to master the intricacies of maritime security” (Interview 96). A representative of the Somaliland MFA confirmed this: “In the process of drafting the JAP, EUCAP Nestor was in the driving seat. It was based on how they wanted to assist us. It was basically a plan of their activities” (Interview 95). To increase the degree of local ownership over the JAP and its objectives, the mission started training and mentoring a group of young Coast Guard officers. Once the EU considered them ready, they were expected to take the responsibility to carry the Coast Guard capacity building forward (Interview 96). In addition to training, this group of young Somalilanders was given laptops and radios, with a view, as one former EUCAP Nestor staff member put it “to buy their loyalty and shape their ideas and mentality” (Interview 99).

In this section, I have demonstrated that the principle of ownership is more than a mere rhetoric that only serves to legitimize interventions but a technology of international security governance that shapes intervention practices. However, as these practices are based on the rationality of interveners, instead of locals, they engender several forms of resistance to which the article turns next.

Local resistance to local ownership

The above-discussed governmental technology and techniques aim to shape the conduct of host states and societies by inculcating a sense of responsibility for externally designed objectives and ideas. However, as Foucault pointed out, every attempt to direct the conduct of others, always generates resistance or “the struggle against the processes implemented for conducting others” (Foucault, 2007, p. 201). Resistance can be public or hidden (Scott 1990). While the public resistance is a direct, open, and overt contestation, the hidden resistance encompasses indirect, hidden, and covert behavior aimed at undermining governmental efforts. In the rest of this

section I show that attempts to increase the degree of local ownership, because they are driven by the political rationality of interveners, engender various forms of local resistance that ultimately hinder ownership.

In theory, most contemporary international interventions (and all CSDP missions and interventions) take place only when there is a formal consent of host states. This means that before interventions can begin, host governments should issue a formal invitation expressing their willingness to host an intervention on their territory. This is then followed by the signature of status of forces/mission agreements as well as other joint documents that were discussed in the previous section. Nevertheless, just because host governments issued an invitation and signed an agreement or formally backed a joint plan doesn't mean that there is a genuine interest to implement interventions' objectives. Quite often, despite declarations of commitment to objectives of interventions issued by local authorities, parts of their local administration often resist to take ownership. Local population, if aware of the intervention at all, is often indifferent or even critical of it.

This is evident across CSDP missions. In the EU, as one strategist pointed out, "many narrow down local ownership to the invitation of the partner country and their request for our support" and believe that ownership exists because reforms that the EU supports are based on national policies (Interview 12). The problem with this assumption is that locals often say yes to whatever is proposed by the EU and make national policy documents only to please donors (Interview 25). Once the mission is launched, the very local authorities that issued the invitation often do not pull their weight in the implementation of objectives, which were not of their own making. CSDP missions are usually too small and technical to matter for larger populations. Sometimes, when the missions are huge as in the case of EULEX Kosovo, the local population has a very low trust in the mission, while some segments Serb are openly hostile to it (Qehaja and Prezlj 2017).

The case of EUCAP Nestor provides a vivid illustration of various forms of resistance to the attempts of the EU to responsibilize the locals for externally devised mission objectives. According to the EU Council decision to launch EUCAP Nestor, for example, "The Governments of Djibouti, Kenya and the Seychelles, and the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) have welcomed the deployment of the Mission in their countries" (EU, 2012).

However, it is well known that the initial demand for the mission came from the EU, concerned for its trade interests undermined by piracy, and not from the host states in the Horn of Africa (Interview 32). Moreover, since the very outset the mission had trouble acquiring even formal letters of invitation and SOMA's from all countries (Tejpar and Zetterlund 2013, p. 22). The interest was particularly lukewarm in Kenya and Tanzania who didn't see piracy as their problem at all (Ibid, pp. 19-22) and initially had unrealistic expectations that the mission will donate equipment like ships (Interview 32).

In Somalia, where the mission has focused its attention since 2015, the situation has been even more complicated. The Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) invited the EU to deploy in Mogadishu (Tejpar and Zetterlund 2013, p.21). This was legally covered by the SOFA previously signed for the operation EUNAVFOR Atalanta, which was then extended to also cover EUCAP Nestor (Interview 33). The government of Somaliland exchanged letters with the EU and signed the Cooperation Agreement, which regulates the status of mission issues (Interview 95). In the Agreement, Somaliland expressed "that it wishes to receive assistance from EUCAP Nestor for the benefit of enhancing maritime security" (Cooperation Agreement, 2014, p.1).

The formal request and subsequent agreements haven't necessarily expressed a genuine interest and determination by Somali counterparts to assume ownership of the mission's objectives. Several mission members complained that Somalis agree to everything that the EU suggest (Interviews 71, 74, 81, 91, 96). This makes the EU, in the words of one mission member, "looking at the world through a colored set of lenses because people often tell you things that they think you want to hear" (Interview 96). Interestingly, several local interlocutors have also confirmed this (Interviews 72, 99). One Somalilander agrees that "the locals usually accept whatever they are offered [...] they want to please the internationals and keep them here not only because of the money and donations but because the government has very few international interlocutors" (Interview 72).

In practice, the locals exhibited various forms of low profile and indirect resistance to the objectives sought by EUCAP Nestor. One illustrative example is the case of coast guard bills. The mission helped both the FGS and the Government of the Republic of Somaliland to draft their coast guard bills, and this task was completed in 2014. The bills were drafted based on "the

European best practice” and foresee Somali coast guards as relatively autonomous civilian bodies within ministries of interior. In its public rhetoric, the EU representatives insist that they didn’t impose the bills and that the sovereign decision lies with the Somali authorities. In the words of one mission member: “We need Somalis themselves to take responsibility”, adopt the law and decide “which direction they want to take with the Coast Guard and maritime security more generally” (Interview 89). In practice, however, the EU also made clear that the eventual decision to keep the Coast Guard as a military institution might hamper future support of the EU (Interview, 17). One member of the Coast Guard recollects how EUCAP Mission members were saying: “if you sign this, it will be the key for funding [...] nothing before you sign the law and it’s passed. Then all the funding of the EU will be open to you” (Interview 78).

Despite the pressures, authorities in Somalia and Somaliland have been dragging their feet with respect to ratification. The reason behind the delay in Mogadishu is primarily the fact that many people in their Ministry of Defense want to keep the control over the future Coast Guard as a nucleus of their navy (Interview 17). This is not seen as strategically important but is also reflecting nostalgia for the Cold War period when Somalia was “the strongest Navy in black Africa” (Interview, 78). Members of the Somaliland Coast Guard (SLCG) deplore the fact that the bill hasn’t been adopted for such a long time as it would legalize their status and significantly strengthen their mandate with police like powers to arrest, detain, question, and interrogate subjects, collect evidence, and take statements from them (Interviews 75, 76, 78, 79, 87). The official storyline behind the delay in ratification is that the Ministry of Interior has other priorities while Somaliland’s Parliament is seriously backlogged. The real reason behind this lack of determination, however, seems to be the fact that the locals’ expectations of material benefits from EUCAP Nestor have never been fully materialized (Interview 78) but also due to concerns about the police powers of the Coast Guard (Interview 95) and its operational autonomy from the Ministry of Interior (Interview 96).

In addition to the foot dragging with regards to the ratification, the locals have resisted the EU’s attempts to responsabilize them in several other, also indirect ways. For example, Coast Guard members do attend the meetings and listen to the advice offered by EUCAP Nestor, but often with little interest to follow through with action. An EUCAP Nestor member recalls one of the meetings where the local officers were advised on how to restructure the Coast Guard:

“Those guys were not even listening [...] you have to understand the mentality [...] you should not bring here how the Coast Guard works in Europe” (Interview 94). This is how another local participant described a lecture by EUCAP Nestor to the Coast Guard leadership on how the new command structure should look like: “The locals were only listening and didn’t ask a single question. Most of them spoke extremely poor English (Interview 91). At the end of the meeting, “they promised that they will take a look [...] but they never implemented the structure” (Ibid).

In February 2016, the local contestation became direct. On February 29, the Ministry of Interior sent a harsh letter to EUCAP Nestor raising serious concerns about its work in Somaliland. Although the letter starts with an expression of gratitude of the Government of Somaliland to the EU for the assistance offered by EUCAP Nestor, it then goes on to make a long list of accusations, including for “imposing” agendas and views on the Coast Guard, “underestimating” the local knowledge and “lecturing [...] rather than being a partner who is here to help the SLCG attain a certain degree of development” (Letter, 2016). What exactly prompted this outburst of open resistance remains debatable. Some interlocutors argue that mentoring of young officers, sometimes in violation of an established chain of command, didn’t go down well with the local authorities. Especially concerned seem to be the old guard who feared that the empowerment of the younger officers, aggressively promoted by EUCAP Nestor, had the potential to side-line them and even leave them jobless in a country without a proper pension system (Interview 91). Other interlocutors argue that the true reasons behind the letter was a rising concern that the strengthened Coast Guard might encroach on illicit activities in the port of Berbera, with suspected links to the president Silanyo. Be that as it may, the consequence of the letter was the removal of the Head of Office while the project of the Limited Initial Operational Capability came to a halt (Interview 96).

Conclusion

Local ownership is a post-Cold War idiom of international peacebuilding universally endorsed by policy makers. Despite rhetorical attachment to the principle and significant efforts invested in its implementation, local ownership remains one of the weakest links in international peacebuilding. In this article, using the examples of CSDP missions and particularly EUCAP Nestor, I have argued that the key reason why local ownership doesn’t work lies in its political

rationality. Despite the liberal language in which the principle is cloaked, I demonstrated that ownership is based on the rationality of interveners, not locals. The political rationality of local ownership has origins in a colonial indirect rule, borne out of the late colonial disillusionment with the prospect of westernization of the colonies prompting increased reliance on indigenous traditions and local proxies. It was revamped as the most reasoned way of governing the volatile peripheries of global order in the early 2000s when the early post-Cold War enthusiasm about the prospects for liberal peace started to falter. Ever since, it's been justified on pragmatic grounds as an instrument of easing the local implementation of universal standards of governance. As a result, it is operationalized through techniques that aim to responsabilize but not necessarily to empower the locals. Ultimately, this alien governmentality, which combines liberal narratives with disciplinary practices, gives rise to various forms of local resistance, both direct and indirect. While responsabilization across border may produce some of the intended consequences in functioning states with minimum requirements for liberal democracy, it has little or no effect in environments with limited statehood and few if any liberal institutions in place. Unfortunately, this is exactly the sort of environment where international crisis management interventions usually take place. That's why locals cannot own international interventions!

This is an important insight because it sheds a novel light not only on the local ownership principle but also on the evolution of international security governance. Contrary to hegemonic accounts that interpret local ownership as a form of liberal security governance, I have situated the origins of this principle in the context of late-colonial shift to indirect rule and linked its re-emergence to the more recent global decline of liberalism. This process gained momentum with the failed interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, continued with the global economic crisis and entered the most recent phase with the recent rise of anti-liberal populism in the US and Europe. In such a context, the political rationality of governing insecurities in weak states moves away from the cosmopolitan ideals of the liberal peace to a more conservative position that aims to govern less but better, through local proxies. The diffusion of the local ownership principle is therefore an expression of this governmental shift from liberalizing the volatile periphery to stabilizing it. This new governmental reason of international interventionism, although keeping the liberal rhetoric as a fig leaf, primarily seeks to contain rather than permanently eradicate endemic insecurities in the global south.

Lastly, the article also brings to light a new set of empirical and theoretical puzzles. Empirically, the article has illustrated universal obstacles to ownership with evidence from one EU mission. Future studies could expand the analysis to local ownership in other international interventions by the EU or other actors. It would be particularly interesting to compare how the logic and techniques of international responsabilization as well as forms of local resistance to it, vary depending on the context. Theoretically, the article hasn't ventured into the question why peacebuilders continue justifying the local ownership on pragmatic ground despite the overwhelming record of implementation problems. Is there something deeply "irrational" about the local ownership principle or, imperfect as it is, it still fulfills some deeper, ontological needs of peacebuilders? If yes, what are they?

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¹ The mission was launched in 2012 with an initial mandate of two years to “assist the development in the Horn of Africa and the Western Indian Ocean States of a self-sustainable capacity for continued enhancement of their maritime security including counter-piracy, and maritime governance” (EU, 2012, p. 40). Since March 2015 the mission phased out of the region and focused on Somalia where the problem of piracy originated. In December 2016, the Council of the European Union extended the mandate of the mission until December 2018 and renamed the mission into EUCAP Somalia (EU, 2016, p. 18).