

'Food-for-thought' Paper

Instrument for Stability (IfS) crisis preparedness component (Art. 4.3) Prospects and challenges for the Strategy Paper 2012-2013

Introduction:

The IfS Strategy Paper 2012-2013 will cover all of the Instrument's long-term programmable actions (under IfS Art. 4). Aspects relating to trans-regional threats (Art. 4.1) and to weapons of mass destruction (Art. 4.2) have already been the subject of a consultation meeting, which took place on 02-03/12/10. Accordingly, *the focus of the meeting scheduled for 24/01/11 is the IfS crisis preparedness component (Art. 4.3).*

In bringing forward the debate on the prospects and challenges for the 2012-2013 Strategy Paper with regard to this latter component, it may be useful to reflect on the following questions:

1. Are the broad outlines¹ of the 2007-2011 Strategy Paper² still valid? If not, why not?
2. Does the focus on the objectives³/priority areas for support⁴ set out in the 2007-2011 Strategy Paper require adjustment? If so, in what way?
3. How can conflict prevention and peace-building be most effectively mainstreamed into EU external assistance processes?

Strategy Paper 2012-2013 - policy context relating to the IfS crisis preparedness component:

In attempting to answer these questions, it may be useful to recall the more general policy context relating to the prospects and challenges for the Strategy Paper 2012-2013 with regard to the IfS crisis preparedness component:

¹ In general, the 2007-2011 Strategy Paper focuses on up-stream investment in civilian capacity in the pre-crisis and early recovery phase through co-operation with (and/or the funding of the activities of) its major implementing partners, including non-state actors, international and regional organizations and relevant Member State bodies. The Paper also explicitly mentions a civil society dialogue network, serving as an important interlocutor with the EU institutions.

² The 2007-2011 Strategy paper is annexed for ease of reference (cf. in particular pages 1-7 and 14-19).

³ The objectives set out in the 2007-2011 Strategy Paper relate to i) building the capacity of non-state actors, regional and sub-regional organizations in the pre-crisis and recovery phase; ii) strengthening early warning capacities; iii) ensuring access to a skilled body of experts on crisis response; and iv) closer co-operation with international (UN, World Bank) and regional organizations.

⁴ The priority areas are as follows: i) strengthening the capacity of non-state actors in mediation, 'track two' diplomacy' and reconciliation; ii) developing the operational capacity of implementing partners in crisis response and early recovery; iii) establishing networks and building capacity of civil society organizations to contribute to EU policy formulation and operational practice; iv) identifying/sharing of best operational practice on using development assistance to address the root causes of conflict; v) developing policy-oriented early warning research; vi) developing/disseminating technologies to support capacity-building objectives; vii) developing training and training standards at the EU and international levels; viii) working on common operational practices and tools at international level, in particular with regard to post-crisis needs assessment, and strengthening operational co-operation between EU programmes and those of Member States.

1. The new Strategy Paper is for a *relatively short duration (two years)*, which may favour judicious revision rather than major re-structuring. In this regard, focus should perhaps rather remain on ensuring the consolidation, continuity and sustainability of actions. A review of activities under the IfS crisis preparedness component to date indicates that the 2007-2011 objectives and priority areas for support are largely on track in terms of implementation. However, it would be useful to discuss how these could be effectively adjusted/up-dated, as appropriate.

2. In the context of the *Mid Term Review* of the IfS (currently in inter-institutional discussion), the European Parliament proposes, in particular, to increase the maximum percentage of the total 2007-2013 financial envelope devoted to the crisis preparedness component from its current level of 5% to 10%, provided that the increase is in line with the 2009 review of EU Peace-building Partnership and internal resources. However, within the current 5% threshold (representing a total of nearly €100 million for crisis preparedness over the seven-year period), funding in 2011-2013 should rise to an approximate average of €20 million per year (from €10 million per year in 2007-2010). Given that this already constitutes a substantial increase in crisis preparedness funding in 2012-2013, consideration may need to be given as to whether the proposed channeling of funding away from other IfS components - most notably that relating to crisis response - is consistent with the optimal use of resources.

3. During 2012-2013, implementation and development of the *Civil Society Dialogue Network* will continue. In this regard, it is envisaged that it will be expanded to include, inter alia, 'geographic' meetings addressing specific crisis situations; meetings in EU Member States; and 'in-country' meetings exploring possible civil society contributions to objectives of CSDP missions

4. There continue to be also a number of *on-going administrative constraints* relating to the implementation of the IfS crisis preparedness component relating to: i) human resources; ii) funding procedures (calls for proposals); and iii) organizational re-structuring of the external relations services (temporary).

5. Preliminary discussions on the new *Multi-annual Financial Perspectives* – which will determine the shape of EU external action instruments after 2013 - are now taking place. In this regard, a public consultation process is currently on-going (response deadline: 31/01/11). Active participation in this consultation process is encouraged (see http://www.eeas.europa.eu/top_stories/291110_en.htm).

Possible elements relating to the IfS crisis preparedness component to be reflected in the 2012-2013 Strategy Paper:

Within this more general context, it may be useful to further reflect on the following more specific elements with regard to the revision of the Strategy Paper for 2012-2013 with regard to the IfS crisis preparedness component:

1 *Continue to focus on pre-crisis and early recovery phase and to work with international organizations, regional organizations, non-state actors.* Until now, activities under the IfS crisis preparedness component have been organized according to target groups of implementing partners (non-state actors, international/regional organizations, Member State bodies). Would there be *potential benefits* in taking a more *thematic approach* and encouraging clustering of activities along thematic lines, irrespective of target group, and of further exploring potential synergies between activities of various target groups funded?

2. *Continue capacity-building funding for non-state actors*, but with emphasis on *supporting field-level organizations on a thematic basis through EU Delegations* (as per 2009 stock-taking and scoping study) and, in particular, examining the possibilities of *increasing* (in co-operation with international and/or regional-level actors, as appropriate) *the capacity of local actors to apply for and absorb EU funding* for conflict prevention and peace-building activities.

3. Examine possibilities of *replicating the Civil Society Dialogue Network on a regional basis* (as also recommended in the 2009 stock-taking and scoping study).

4. Explore how IfS crisis preparedness *activities with regional and sub-regional organizations may be better integrated into a clear political strategy towards these bodies*, in the context of key EU regional strategies (for example, the EU Strategy for Africa), where appropriate.

5. Continue to build a *more structured policy dialogue with relevant parts of UN* (inter alia through existing EU-UN structures) and with other international organizations (for example, the World Bank). Endeavour to encourage also co-operation among the UN bodies with regard to activities funded⁵.

6. Explore ways to *facilitate co-operation with Member States* (which to date has been limited to training activities for civilian and police experts to participate in stabilization missions), for example, with regard to enhancing the policy dialogue with specialized aid agencies – and more particularly with Conflict Prevention/Peace-building Units in Foreign Ministries – on approaches to preventing, and responding to, crisis situations.

⁵ For example, this is already the case with regard to UN Inter-agency Framework Team for Preventive Action with regard to work on natural resources and conflict, the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration with regard to work on DDR, the MSU/BCPR with regard to work on mediation, and UN Women/UNDP/MSU with regard to work on Women, Peace and Security.