

Civil Society Dialogue Network Member State Meeting France

Key Points from the Meeting

Monday, 7 November 2011

Assessing the peacebuilding potential of CFSP and CSDP after the Lisbon Treaty

This document presents the key points made by participants at the CSDN meeting. These points do not necessarily represent the views of the organisers, nor can they be attributed to any individual participants or participating institutions.

On the EU, conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Points made by the participants include:

- Although the Lisbon Treaty introduced important changes to CFSP/CSDP structures and decision-making processes, the implementation structures responsible for conflict prevention and peacebuilding and for crisis response within the EU institutions are in the early stages of operational co-operation. The EU should therefore continue to work towards a more holistic approach to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.
- The creation of a Directorate for Conflict Prevention and Security Policy, as well as a commitment to the promotion of peace as enshrined in the treaty, are both significant achievements. However, recent events such as the Arab Spring and the Libyan intervention show that more efforts must be made to guarantee greater leadership, consistency, and coherence in future EU external actions.
- The EU should prioritise mid-level policies that include guidance on how to build peace and prevent conflict and on how to integrate a peacebuilding approach into regional strategies such as the Sahel Security and Development Strategy and the Comprehensive Approach to Sudan and South Sudan. It does not need grand strategies, as there are plenty of high-level policy commitments.
- EU development assistance also needs to be modernised and used more effectively in order to tackle the root causes of conflicts.

On CFSP and the comprehensive approach to crisis management after Lisbon

Points made by the participants include:

- Voting procedures regarding CFSP and CSDP require unanimity which too often restricts the ability to adopt common positions in a timely and efficient manner which is why some participants argued that the voting procedures should be revised. At the same time, the EEAS is addressing the important challenge of moving from early warning to early action.
- Pooling and sharing of European military capabilities could be useful if it leads to financial savings. At the same time, some participants felt that the focus on pooling and sharing of military capabilities may neglect the importance of strengthening civilian capabilities.
- According to some participants, there is a risk that continued civil-military integration will lead to increased militarisation in two senses (1) imbalance in allocation of resources (more human resources allocated to military CSDP purposes (while most missions are civilian) (2)

application of military concepts and approaches to civilian action. Other participants thought that the comprehensive approach, if wrongly applied, risks turning the EU into a soft, civilian, power only.

- The EEAS should also bolster its conflict expertise to assist relevant geographic desks and crisis management services.
- The separation of competences among the EU institutions continues to pose a challenge to the comprehensive approach. The inclusion of the crisis management bodies into the EEAS and the strengthening of geographic desks are expected to lead to more integrated EU approach towards conflict-affected countries.
- CSDP missions are one tool within a broader strategy for peacebuilding and conflict prevention and for crisis management. The Lisbon Treaty reinforces the idea of conflict prevention CSDP missions and this could be explored. Due to recent improvements, civilian personnel can now in urgent cases be deployed before a council decision is finalised which is a positive step in this respect.
- Participants discussed whether the EU needs to increase its military capabilities or retain its position as a 'soft power'. It was questioned whether 'soft power' is a misnomer as it understates the impact and political weight the EU has as, for instance, a development actor.

On the impact and effectiveness of CSDP missions: the example of CSDP missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Points made by the participants include:

- Since the Lisbon Treaty, the EEAS manages CSDP missions but the accounting responsibility for the mission budget rests with the European Commission. Close co-operation between crisis management bodies, the relevant Commission services and geographic desks are necessary from the start of planning a CSDP mission.
- The recent evaluation of the European Commission's support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding is useful. There needs to be better evaluation of CSDP missions in order to assess their contribution to long-term peace. Cost-effectiveness analysis, on-the-ground evaluations, and other lesson-learning exercises should be carried out on a more regular basis.
- Coordination of the two CSDP missions and other EU policy towards the DRC has improved with the new standing of the EU Delegations. Some participants said that a permanent institutionalised co-ordination mechanism which includes all EU actors, DRC authorities and non-state actors (civil society and the private sector) would be desirable.
- Although EUPOL and EUSEC have been relatively successful, their effectiveness is impeded by lack of financial and human resources related to their ambitious mandate (this is especially the case for EUPOL).
- The EU Delegation in Kinshasa should also be equipped to handle police and military reform programmes. Some participants proposed delivery of civilian programmes through Delegations rather than CSDP missions.

Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a three-year project funded by the European Commission aimed at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and the EU institutions.

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