

## Civil Society Dialogue Network Member State Meeting France

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

Monday 7 November 2011  
*Académie Diplomatique Internationale, Paris*

This meeting was organised by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) and ESSEC IRÉNÉ (Institute for Research and Education on Negotiation) in cooperation with the European External Action Service (Directorate for Conflict Prevention and Security Policy) and the European Commission (Service for Foreign Policy Instruments). It took place within the framework of the Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN), a project to facilitate dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on peacebuilding policies.

The objective of the meeting was to assess the peacebuilding potential of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) since the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Particular attention was paid to the EU's comprehensive approach to crisis management after Lisbon, and the impact and effectiveness of the CSDP missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The meeting was held under the Chatham House rule. This report gathers views expressed and recommendations made by participants in the meeting which are in no way attributable to the organisers, individual participants or participating institutions. This report is structured around the main themes discussed, drawing out the key points raised by the panellists and participants and highlighting recommendations.

For more information about this event, please contact [Josephine Liebl](#).

#### Welcome and opening remarks

Mr. Timothy W. Ryback, Deputy Secretary General of the Académie Diplomatique Internationale (ADI), welcomed participants to the CSDN meeting.<sup>1</sup> He explained that ADI was a very appropriate setting for such a meeting because it was founded in the 1920s as a “diplomatic laboratory for exploring the maladies that plague the world”.

Prof. Aurélien Colson, Director of ESSEC IRÉNÉ, welcomed participants and said that despite the grave financial and economic difficulties the EU currently faces, it must not be forgotten that one of the ultimate goals of European integration has always been to promote peace. Prof. Colson also referred to President Mitterrand's famous phrase “Europe is peace”, and explained that this not only means peace within Europe but also its capacity to promote peace outside its borders.

Ms Catherine Woollard, Executive Director of EPLO, welcomed participants and introduced EPLO. She explained the purpose of the CSDN, which is to facilitate dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on peacebuilding issues. She noted that this meeting was particularly important because it sought to bring dialogue to the Member States who are arguably the most important actors when it comes to EU decision-making, particularly those larger Member States who are committed to the European Project. Ms Woollard also said that despite the current financial crisis, the EU still has the power and potential to play an important role in peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

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<sup>1</sup> Ambassador Jean-Claude Cousseran, Secretary General of ADI, was unable to join the meeting.

## **The EU and Peacebuilding – State of play focusing on CFSP and CSDP**

The first session included presentations by Andrew Byrne, *Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation Division, EEAS*, Catherine Woollard, *Executive Director, EPLO*, Nicolas Suran, *Deputy Head, External Relations Service, EU Directorate of French Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Presentations were followed by comments from Damien Helly, *EU Institute for Security Studies* and Marc Fonbaustier, *Situation Centre, Crisis Centre of French Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. The session was chaired by Alain Délétrouz, *Vice-president (Europe), International Crisis Group*, and was followed by an open debate.

### ***On the EU's support to peacebuilding and conflict prevention:***

- The EU has a body of policy and legal commitments for the promotion of peace in the EU's external affairs, including the Lisbon Treaty which identifies peacebuilding and conflict prevention as objectives of EU external action; the Lisbon Treaty now includes a reference to the preservation of peace as one of the key objectives of EU external action which provides a legal obligation for the EU to pursue these aims. But there are still several obstacles which impede the proper functioning and delivery of the EU's peacebuilding efforts.
- The EEAS tries to support the comprehensive approach by addressing early warning, conflict prevention, crisis response and post-conflict reconstruction under its remit. However, responsibility for external action remains fragmented across institutions (EEAS, DG DEVCO, EC FPI and European Parliament) and Member States.
- Peacebuilding emerged as one of the key issues during the negotiations following the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, thus demonstrating widespread belief in the importance of this topic among EU policy-makers. The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, has said that a key objective of the EEAS should be the prevention of conflicts. There are, however, questions as to how this commitment will actually translate into practice.

### ***On the remaining challenges to EU peacebuilding and conflict prevention after Lisbon:***

- The EEAS brings together different cultures, and with it different conceptions of what peacebuilding and conflict prevention should mean in practice. It will take time for these structures to be integrated effectively and instruments/policies to be completely harmonised. The challenge therefore lies in developing a service which can speak for the EU with one voice but also avoid acting as a parallel "28<sup>th</sup>" diplomatic service.
- The EEAS is already developing regional and country/joint country strategies such as the Sahel Security and Development Strategy, the set of policies on the EU's response to the Arab Spring and the Comprehensive Approach to Sudan and South Sudan. However, it is as yet unclear whether Member States will unite behind these initiatives. Although we have seen positive developments in the case of the EU's Comprehensive Approach to Sudan and South Sudan, the EU's response to the Arab Spring shows a much more fragmented picture; challenges have been to ensure the support of Member States and to respond imaginatively and effectively to the developments.
- Pooling and sharing of European military capabilities could be useful if it leads to financial savings.
- Certain participants cautioned against continued civil-military integration if not done carefully because it could lead to increased militarisation of civilian crisis management in two senses:

(1) imbalance in allocation of resources (more human resources allocated to military component of CSDP when most missions are civilian and leadership of civilian actions by military personnel); (2) application of military concepts and approaches to civilian actions. Recent rumours about the creation of civil military battle-groups illustrate this trend.

- The on-going reform of EU development assistance is long overdue and the recent evaluation of the European Commission's support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding actually identifies the lack of a structural approach to conflict prevention in development assistance as one of the weaknesses of EU external action. There needs to be better use of development assistance to tackle the root causes of conflicts, including looking at how conflict prevention and peacebuilding can be better integrated in future EU development assistance.
- Another issue which was raised several times over the course of the discussion is the need for greater leadership inside the EEAS and experienced and capable senior-level staff, although it is a relatively new institution and needs time to assert itself on the international stage.

### ***On the Member States' support to EU peacebuilding***

- There is a lack of consensus among Member States on how and when the EU should resort to the use of force. Some Member States continue to push for a form of crisis management that focuses on military solutions, while others favour actions which strengthen EU soft power. Certain participants suggested that the EU and Member States should consider including R2P in future treaties or legally binding documents.
- Many Member States seem unaware of the limited power that Europe has in many regions of the world. According to a number of participants, Europe and individual European countries are increasingly perceived of as insignificant or even irrelevant in many places. In order to maximise its leverage and power, Europe should act collectively. On this respect, the presence of EU Delegations in many parts of the world is an asset that still needs to be fully capitalised on.
- There are only three countries where all Member States have embassies (USA, Russia and China), and over a hundred where there is only a dozen representations. In this respect, Article 23 TFEU which entitled European citizens to consular and diplomatic protection by EU delegations and embassies of Members States in third countries provides an opportunity to deepen integration and share sovereignty over matters which have traditionally remained within the purview of Member States. However, cooperation at this stage is still embryonic and more resources should go towards strengthening and reproducing similar types of cooperation.

### ***On how CSDP can support peacebuilding and conflict prevention more effectively:***

- Some participants argued that the EU's comparative advantage remains on the civilian side because that is where it has expertise, experience and fitting tools. In addition, the EU is welcomed by third countries at least in part because it is not a strong military power. Therefore, significant improvements in resources – both human and financial – must be made to ensure that EU civilian crisis management capabilities are strengthened. The EEAS should also bolster its conflict expertise to assist geographic teams within the Service.
- Voting procedures regarding CFSP and CSDP require unanimity which too often restricts the ability to adopt common positions in a timely and efficient manner.

- The Lisbon Treaty opens up the possibility for CSDP missions to be used as conflict prevention missions so this should be encouraged in future external actions. This could take the form of diplomatic, political missions which engage in mediation, facilitation of talks, and wider support for peace processes.
- There needs to be better evaluation of CSDP missions in order to assess their contribution to long-term peace in the countries where they are deployed. Cost-effectiveness analysis, on-the-ground evaluations, information-sharing and other types of lesson-learning exercises should be carried out more regularly.
- For CSDP missions to contribute to peacebuilding, they need to be seen as one tool within a broader strategy for promoting peace and stability. In this respect, the EU's comprehensive approach to Sudan and South Sudan is a good example as CSDP missions are considered as part of an overall strategy towards the two countries.

**Recommendations:**

- The EEAS should develop policy guidance that clarifies how both conflict prevention and peacebuilding can be integrated into all EU policies.
- EU development assistance should be updated to include findings such as the 2011 World Bank's World Development Report and the outcomes of the evaluation of EC support to conflict prevention and peacebuilding so that it can be used to address the root causes of conflicts.
- The EU Member States should have a discussion about the use of force within the Common Foreign and Security Policy.
- EEAS management should ensure greater leadership, consistency and coherence in future EU external actions.
- CSDP missions should be better evaluated to assess their contribution to long-term peace in the countries where they are deployed.

**CFSP and the comprehensive approach to crisis management**

The second session included presentations by Marina Vraila, *Crisis Management and Planning Directorate, EEAS*, Arnaud Migoux, *European Union Desk at the Directorate for strategic affairs of the French Ministry of Defence*, Alain Délétroz, *Vice-president (Europe) of the International Crisis Group*, François Gaulme, *Crisis Prevention Unit, Agence française de développement*. Comments were provided by Michel Foucher, *Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale*, and Général Guy de Haynin de Bry, *Consultant to DCAF*. The session was chaired by Sophie Haspeslagh, *Conciliation Resources*, and was followed by an open debate.

***On the comprehensive approach to crisis management:***

- While the EU's comprehensive approach is impeded by the separation of competences among the EU institutions, the integration of the crisis management bodies into the EEAS and the expected strengthening of geographic desks are presumed to lead to more integrated and coordinated EU actions in conflict-affected countries.
- The Crisis Management Concept, now part of the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate (CMPD), is an important tool to ensure the coherence and comprehensiveness of the EU's approach to crisis management as it not only takes into account the range and scale

of the various CSDP-related mechanisms available to respond to crises, but also the specificities of the countries where CSDP missions are deployed. Some participants noted that the CMPD suffers from the lacking strategic direction from the EEAS leadership which results in a 'governance gap' and a tendency to use self-censorship in anticipation of possible reticence higher up the chain of command.

- Participants also 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, for instance, as a development actor.
- Other participants expressed concern that the comprehensive approach risks being used as a pretext to further "civilianise CSDP". It is feared that this could result in a weakening of its military component.
- Other participants suggested that these two dynamics are not necessarily in contradiction, since they argue that successful conflict prevention also presupposes a credible defence option to back it up.

***On the challenges to the EU's comprehensive approach to crisis management:***

- Although there is now a clear division of labour within the EEAS, the current organisational structure still lacks a clear chain of command, which some participants referred to as teething problems. Actors operating in conflict zones need a clear reporting line if they are to act effectively. The current situation not only impedes decision-making on a political level, but also impacts on the day-to-day decision-making of staff where missions are deployed e.g. problems in procurement, transport, etc.
- The EU is becoming increasingly sidelined since the nature of support to peacebuilding and development requires global coordination which happens at the UN level, to a lesser degree by the Bretton Woods institutions and, for research and conceptual development, at the OECD. While the EU has a role to play regarding conflict prevention, its role in post-conflict reconstruction and crisis management is much smaller, as decisions tend to be taken at UN level, such as the response to the crises in Côte d'Ivoire and Libya; regional institutions such as the AU and ECOWAS are also becoming more important.
- The EU lacks a clear vision in terms of strategic external action in specific crisis situations. The European Security Strategy (2003) does not define common European interests for the 27 Member States. Every attempt at including the words 'common interests' was replaced with the words 'common priorities'. Until serious attempts are made at defining European strategic and geopolitical interests, its overall capacity for rapid and strategic response to conflict will remain limited.

- The different cultures and traditions that are brought together in the EEAS which may be perceived as competing with each other, can actually contribute to the EU's comprehensive approach to peacebuilding. For example, it was the so-called 'neutral states' which facilitated the adoption of the Petersberg Tasks.

**Recommendations:**

- The comprehensive approach should be reinforced by prioritising mid-level policies that include guidance on how to build peace and prevent conflict into the EU approach towards a third country.
- EU Member States should seek to define a clear vision of what the EU's common strategic interests are which would support the implementation of the comprehensive approach.
- Civil-military integration should not be implemented at the expense of the civilian component of CSDP.
- CSDP missions should have a clear and realistic objective that addresses the specific situation instead of functioning primarily as a tool to support the European defence policy.
- The EU should address the four 'c's to overcome the challenges it faces regarding the comprehensive approach: co-ordination, coherence, collective action and capacity.

**Impact and effectiveness of CSDP missions: The example of CSDP missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

The third panel included presentations by François de Peyrecave, *Sub-Directorate for Central Africa, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Kristiaan Pellegrims, *Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, European Commission*, Ambassador Aldo Ajello, *Former Special Representative of the EU for the Great Lakes Region*. Comments were provided by Saïd Abbas Ahamed, *Sorbonne University*, and Arnout Justaert, *Leuven University*. The session was chaired by Prof. Gilbert Khadiagala, *University of Wiwatersrand (South Africa)*, and was followed by an open debate.

***On the impact and effectiveness of CSDP missions:***

- Since the Lisbon Treaty, the EEAS manages CSDP missions but the responsibility for the budget for civilian missions rests with the European Commission and the budget for military missions is administered by the Athena mechanism. To address this shortcoming, close co-operation between crisis management bodies and the relevant Commission services are necessary from the start and planning of CSDP missions.
- Several technical improvements have been made in recent years such as new procurement procedures, preparatory measures, framework contracts for procurement (so that missions can quickly buy equipment without having to go through lengthy vetting procedures), new contract plans for accommodation containers and medical services on the ground, etc., all of which save a lot of time in the deployment of CSDP missions.

***On the examples of EUPOL/EUSEC:***

- CSDP missions have to take into account the political dimension of the countries in which they operate. There are many actors (international agencies, special representatives, NGOs, etc.) present in the DRC today, so any assessment of CSDP missions in DRC must take into account the specificities of the "Congolese context".

- Although EUPOL and EUSEC have been acclaimed as successes of the EU, their effectiveness is impeded by a lack of financial and human resources. The suggestion that the EU should consider merging the two missions to make the EU's external action in the DRC more coherent carries the risk that the mission would be less technical in its mandate, and thereby counterproductive.
- Coordination between missions like EUSEC and EUPOL should form the basis for the EU's comprehensive approach, but also coordination with other actors on the ground. For instance, PriceWaterhouseCoopers is heavily involved in Congolese Police Reform, yet EUPOL has no framework for engaging in political dialogue with non-state actors. CSDP missions could benefit greatly from increased coordination with non-state actors engaged in similar projects. This would also help to prevent unnecessary competition and duplication of peacebuilding efforts.
- More resources should be allocated to strengthen other SSR initiatives, particularly with regards to planning capacity. Although EUSEC has already made substantial contributions in this regard e.g. distribution of ID cards and biometric census of FARDC, the chain of payment is still not fully functional.
- Overall, EU external action in DRC has been effective in a number of ways. Its financial commitment to stabilisation and electoral processes, its capacity to build coalitions of international actors, bringing in Member State expertise to assist regional efforts for peace such as Portugal in the case of Angola or Belgium in the case Rwanda, etc., have all been crucial in maintaining and promoting peace and security in DRC.

***On the remaining challenges:***

- Urgent improvement is needed in CSDP decision-making process. The Council decision making procedure used to take into account the time and timelines that the Commission needed to sign contracts, but this is no longer the case according to some participants.
- Another possible improvement regards the use of the CFSP budget. In 2011, no budget was set aside for the EUSRs because it was the intention of the EEAS to reduce the number of EUSRs and nominate some of them as heads of delegations. This did not happen and the EEAS has had to draw on the budget that had originally been set aside for "possible new actions". As a result, if the opportunity for new types of actions arises in coming months, the budget will already have been spent.
- Mandates for CSDP missions are often too short to fully realise stated objectives, and the missions often lack the resources and personnel necessary to implement the ever-increasing number of projects (police reform, gender-based violence sensitisation, advice for drafting legal and preparatory framework, etc.). This results in missions becoming more dependent upon bilateral financial contributions.
- It is also important to realise that civilian initiatives like police reform cannot "stand alone". Corruption, poverty, armed groups and lack of infrastructure are all sources of daily insecurity and although CSDP missions try to address these to the best of their ability, the missions do not have enough staff and resources to deal with such a wide array of issues. Therefore, future civilian actions will only be successful if they are used in a more holistic way.
- Some participants proposed delivery of civilian programmes through Delegations rather than CSDP missions. For this, the EU Delegation in Kinshasa should also be equipped to handle police and military reform programmes.

### **Recommendations:**

- The CSDP decision-making process and the use of CFSP budget should be reviewed to accommodate the institutional structure after the Lisbon Treaty changes.
- The EU should strengthen co-ordination both with other international actors and donors and also with Congolese authorities and local civil society.
- The EU Delegation in Kinshasa could also be equipped to handle police and military reform programmes in order that the Delegation carries out activities promoting institution-building, state-building, rule of law, and so on.

### **Closing remarks**

The fourth session concluded with closing remarks by Joseph Maïla, *Director for Prospective at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, and comments by Aurélien Colson and Catherine Woollard.

- The current context of financial crisis makes assessing the peacebuilding potential of CFSP and CSDP after the Lisbon Treaty very difficult. Different administrative and cultural traditions within the EEAS means that EU conflict prevention and crisis management structures are still learning to work together, and given the current political and economic climate, Member States may be reluctant to deepen cooperation over such matters.
- The Franco-German narrative on European integration and peace has been successful insofar as Europe is concerned, but it has not been able to export this model outside the EU's borders. The EU therefore needs to go beyond this traditional narrative and seek to define a new "normative perimeter", not least because it is coming in increasing competition with other narratives, but also because Europe's political/economic weight in global affairs is rapidly shrinking in favour of emerging countries.
- The EU should seek to empower endogenous movements working for the promotion of peace. Military interventions by themselves cannot be expected to solve conflicts; though external action in support of peace is laudable, it is only by including and empowering local actors and elites that long-term peace can be achieved.
- The lack of EU political leadership and the different traditions within the EEAS make it difficult to realise the key purpose of the Lisbon Treaty. The EU needs to continue working towards more comprehensive and integrated approaches to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

### **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.

For more information about the Civil Society Dialogue Network, please visit the [EPLO website](#).