



ROMANIA
Ministry of
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Report

CIVIL SOCIETY DIALOGUE NETWORK

Member State Meeting Romania

Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans

Tuesday, 28 June 2011

The report includes all recommendations presented by participants at the meeting. In some cases, there was not broad agreement and the recommendations do not necessarily reflect the view of the organisers: EPLO, PATRIR, EEAS, European Commission and the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting started with welcoming words from Nicolae Idu, Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Romania and opening remarks from Bogdan Aurescu, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romania.

It was explained that the purpose of the meeting was to bring together representatives of the Romanian government, European Union institutions and civil society from Romania, the Eastern Neighbourhood and Western Balkans to talk about issues relating to the EU and conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The Council conclusions on conflict prevention from 20 June 2011, which were adopted by all EU Member States, acknowledge the importance of the prevention of violent conflict. Romania is supportive of strong external action of the EU, and is of the position that it is time to move on from a decade of EU introspection and to become a relevant global player. There is a need for more structure and coherence, pragmatism and convergence of policies and actions. In this respect, Romania is supportive of the current review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), and sees the need to adopt a more practical results-oriented dialogue, particularly with the Eastern Neighbourhood. There is a risk of de-prioritising the Eastern Neighbourhood, but as there are still protracted conflicts and authoritarian regimes, it is important not to lose focus. The interest for achieving the European integration objective for the Western Balkans remains high.

Romania's role in international conflict prevention and civilian crisis management increased after joining the EU. The Romanian government is increasing its civilian capabilities under Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). It is already ranked amongst the top three contributors to CSDP operations, and is first in terms of number of experts deployed in civilian missions. Building on this, Romania is now joining the movement towards crisis management inter-agency capability, with an emphasis on civilian capabilities and a more structured approach to deployment, training and generating mission-specific resources.

The EU and conflict prevention and peacebuilding – state of play

The first session included presentations by Andrew Byrne, Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Mediation Directorate, EEAS and Catherine Woollard, Executive Director, EPLO which were followed by an open debate. The session was chaired by Corina Simon from PATRIR.

The role of the European External Action Service (EEAS)

Within the European External Action Service (EEAS), the Directorate for Conflict Prevention and Security Policy is responsible for mainstreaming conflict prevention and peacebuilding across the EEAS. The EEAS is a merger of services from the Commission, Council and Member State expertise; therefore, trying to integrate the policies of conflict prevention and peacebuilding is a challenging task but should in the end lead to the development of coherent, multidimensional and effective EU approach.

The personal commitment of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR/VP) is a welcome development as she has given much focus to trying to mainstream the policies, particularly in the geographical directorates of the EEAS. The European Parliament, especially certain MEPs are also very interested and active on conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

The EU's intervention in conflict prevention and peacebuilding situations covers the entire conflict cycle: from early warning to conflict prevention, crisis response and management, post-conflict peacebuilding and finally, reconstruction. In this respect, the European Security Strategy from 2003 serves as an important reference document as it links security and development issues for the first time.

Much of the work on conflict prevention and peacebuilding is done through geographical development instruments, as well as the Instrument for Stability (IfS), in the EU's 130 delegations worldwide. There are regional crisis management planners in eight key delegations, who are able to monitor the situations in various parts of the world and help colleagues in the region and Brussels to prepare and identify actions that would be useful to manage crises or post-crisis situations.

The IfS is largely a short-term crisis response funding programme, which responds to both man-made and natural disasters and can last up to 18 months. With regard to crisis response actions, the instrument is flexible regarding decision-making and does not require Member States to be consulted *a priori*. It is complementary to other instruments, and does not provide humanitarian assistance or military actions. Longer-term actions under the Instrument can also focus on trans-regional threats, such as anti-narcotics, human trafficking, terrorism, and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Within the IfS, the Peacebuilding Partnership focuses on three target groups: civil society organisations, sub-regional, regional and international organisations and training agencies of EU Member States. The goals are to foster a dialogue with civil society and to work with the relevant implementing partners with a view to mobilizing and consolidating peace-building expertise.

Member States involvement in EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding

A number of Member States understand the comparative advantage of the EU to be in peacebuilding and the prevention of conflict. The initiative of the Hungarian presidency of the Council of the EU to review the EU programme for the prevention of violent conflict (Gothenburg Programme) is an example of this. This is matched by concrete evidence which demonstrates that conflict prevention is an effective policy tool, most recently in the World Bank's 2011 World Development Report.

However, money spent on EU foreign affairs is only 4 % of the EU's budget and 40 % is still spent on agricultural policy. This calls into question whether foreign policy is a priority of the EU.

The EU's financial instruments

The next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) will be an opportunity for the EU to adapt their financial instruments to become more flexible and easier to administer. The EU institutions are beginning to discuss how the financial instruments in the next MFF will look. Although it is not clear what they will look like, given the current economic climate, it is unlikely that the money available will increase substantially.

Challenges to conflict prevention and peacebuilding at EU level

Firstly, the gap between the adoption of policy commitments and their implementation remains. Also, for conflict prevention to be mainstreamed into all EU policies, the EEAS needs policy advice and guidance on conflict prevention. Both the Hungarian initiative to review the Gothenburg Programme and the EU Fragility Action Plan – had they advanced - could have delivered such implementation guidance. A civil society participant expressed concerns about the HR/VP's decision to discontinue both processes. While the EU does not need any more norms for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the concrete implementation guidance that both these documents would have delivered is much needed.

Secondly, a fuller assessment and improvement of the EU's tools for crisis management is necessary. For instance, there is limited assessment of the impact of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions. It is difficult to see whether the missions are cost effective and the right policy tool in a given context. In addition, there should be more accountability between the missions and the societies in which they are deployed.

Thirdly, policy fragmentation still remains. A number of policies are not in the Service, for instance trade or development. This can lead to EU policies towards a third country contradicting each other. Areas in which the EU has considerable leverage, for instance trade and investment, should be used to prevent conflict. Also, the EU also needs to deal with internal problems, such as the discrimination of Roma inside the EU, which affects the EU's credibility as a foreign policy actor.

Evaluation of EU policy and programmes on conflict prevention and peacebuilding

The quality and scope of evaluation of EU policy and programmes is complex. A common evaluation unit inside the European Commission deals with the evaluation of activities under the EU's external financial instruments. For instance, there is an extensive evaluation of all EU's support for conflict prevention that will be published in September 2011. One of the preliminary findings is that only 3% of funding for conflict prevention has gone to civil society with around 60% going to UN agencies. A recent Court of Auditors report was critical of the EU's support to conflict prevention channelled through UN agencies, due to the missing monitoring and questions about effectiveness. CSDP missions are not covered by the evaluation unit since they are not funded by the Community budget. In general, they have their own evaluation mechanisms in place.

Potential of the reviewed European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)

The recent ENP Communication from 25 May 2011¹ can be seen as a paradigm shift of the relations between the EU and its neighbouring countries. The main objective is deep and sustainable democracy which goes beyond the regular holding of elections and includes respect for human rights standards and other elements.

The ENP is based on three partnership principles: mutual accountability, differentiation (allowing for more flexible relationships) and conditionality ('more for more'). It is however not yet clear how 'more for

¹ Joint Communication from the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (COM(2011)303). A new response to a changing Neighbourhood (25 May 2011).

more' and the corresponding 'less for less' will be used and if and how civil society will be involved in the process.

In the case of the Republic of Moldova, it was pointed out that the establishment of the EEAS resulted in a decrease of conflict policy expertise as the EU Special Representative's mandate was ended while the EU Delegation in Chisinau was not provided with additional conflict policy experts to replace the gap that was created.

Recommendations:

- The EU should make its external financial instruments more flexible and should simplify regulations to lighten the administrative burden;
- Innovative ways should be explored to focus on increased accountability of CSDP missions to civil society in the countries where they are deployed;
- For the EU to increase its conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacity, it needs policy guidance that clarifies how both conflict prevention and peacebuilding can be integrated into all EU policy;
- Member States should align their foreign policy with a common EU approach;
- Peace should be integrated as a benchmark into the 'more for more' approach; in addition, peacebuilding indicators should be integrated into the proposed benchmarks.

Romania's perspective on EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding policies

The second session included presentations from Petru Dumitriu, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romania, Dragoş Ilinca, Ministry of National Defence, Romania and Corina Simon, PATRIR, which were followed by an open debate. It was chaired by Roxana Cristescu from Crisis Management Initiative.

Shift in the notion of security and the implications for the EU

Globalisation, conceived as the primacy of free market, human rights and pluralistic democracy as well as the erosion of state sovereignty, led to profound changes in the concept of security. Human security means that safety of individuals is the focus in efforts aimed at maintaining security. This also means that individuals' needs have priority over the *raison d'état* and sometimes even prevail. Human security is complementary to state security but brings with it amendments to policies that are employed to react to security threats. In this respect, it should be ensured that human security is informed by a gender perspective.

The Responsibility to Protect is an outcome of the shift in the concept of security from state to human security. It was employed for the first time in the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 on Libya in March 2011. The work of the EU was important in supporting this view of the UN Security Council and is currently involved in implementing the Resolution. The rapid changes happening at the international level should be mirrored by the EU and integrated into the EEAS.

Independent of the success of the EEAS, it will continue to be difficult to co-ordinate the position of EU Member States in, for instance, the UN Security Council as they are pursuing their own national interests, which sometimes may not be in line with the concept of human security.

Romania's perspective on EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)

CSDP covers the entire spectrum of the crisis cycle from military stabilisation to rule of law missions. In this respect, the expanding of Petersberg Tasks has been an important step in the development of CSDP. While the military has a role to play in peacekeeping, its conflict prevention and peacebuilding potential is much more limited. An intervening military force can create the situation of physical security in which a reconciliation process can take place.

Romania is currently contributing to EU operations and the development of capabilities in the defence area and is particularly engaged in the Western Balkans. Romania is actively involved in developing the Battle Groups.

The EU's capacity to integrate civilian and military crisis management is a prerequisite for successful CSDP missions. Bringing together military capacity and civilian planners at the planning level is expected to result in enhanced co-operation and more effective EU action. In this respect, lessons could be drawn from civil-military integration at the OSCE.

Unfortunately, civil-military integration at EU level has led to a decrease of civilian expertise at the planning and operational level. This should be taken into account and rectified by Member States, who are responsible for nominating civilian and military experts for planning and implementation of CSDP missions. Similarly, the imbalance between female and male appointees, especially in higher level positions, has to be addressed.

In reaction to the financial crisis, Member States should make use of the pooling and sharing of military capabilities within the EU. Similarly, the EU's relation to NATO should be strengthened according to the logic of permanent structured co-operation.

The contribution of civil society to conflict prevention and peacebuilding

Before engaging in a peace process, it is important for civil society to conduct thorough conflict analysis, map the risk factors and develop future scenarios which should all be done in a multi-stakeholder process, bringing together local and international actors. It is important that international organisation co-operate with local civil society to ensure that their activities are informed by local knowledge of the conflict dynamics. The Romanian Training Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction is bringing together the different actors involved in post-war recovery from e.g. government, civil society which is a welcome development as it tries to co-ordinate the different stakeholders involved in peacebuilding.

When using the term conflict prevention, it is important to understand it to mean the prevention of violent conflict according to the conflict transformation perspective. Civil society can also work on what is defined as 'hard security' such as arms control, de-militarisation etc. and perform an important watchdog function in this regard.

To build sustainable peace, national infrastructures for peace and conflict-handling capacities should be supported. In addition, in Romania, peace and development education is important preparation to increase capacity regarding conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Media also has an important role to play in this regard as it can be a vehicle for demonstrating the success for peace processes.

Bridging the gap between conflict dynamics and institutional funding requirements can be difficult for civil society. Many civil society actors are faced with the challenge of demonstrating short-term results for peacebuilding, although this is a long-term process that may not develop in a linear fashion.

The important contribution that civil society can make to conflict prevention in the Eastern Neighbourhood has been recognised in the European Parliament resolution on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea in January 2011.

Recommendations:

- The EU's ability to act with a common voice in international bodies such as the UN has to be increased;
- The EU Member States should ensure the effectiveness of CSDP missions by seconding qualified staff for planning and implementation of the missions and increasing their evaluation;
- The EU should implement the recommendations of the European Parliament resolution on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea;
- The EU should ensure that peacebuilding policies are not undermined by other policies, for instance trade or weapons exports.

Case study session: Republic of Moldova

The case study session on the Republic of Moldova included presentations given by John Beyer, University of Oxford² and Roxana Cristescu, Crisis Management Initiative³ and was followed by a debate facilitated by Josephine Liebl, EPLO.

Dynamics of the conflict and the importance of economic and social factors

The current stand-off is most harmful to local populations living on both sides of the river and its effects can be seen most poignantly regarding social and economic issues. The key factor determining how the conflict is perceived is age, with older generations having had regular contact across the current conflict divide e.g. shared education for much of their lives.

Considering the important role that economic factors play in the conflict, the EU should use its leverage to encourage co-operation by, for example, making it clear that export requirements apply to the whole of Republic of Moldova, independent of which side of the river bank economic agents are based. In this respect, engagement with Transnistrian business associations should be prioritised as they can push representatives from the Transnistrian region to act. EUBAM also has an important role to play in addressing the core issues that impact on the conflict dynamic, namely corruption and trade facilitation.

While it is important for the Republic of Moldova to develop reintegration strategies (pensions schemes, public service etc), it was acknowledged that it may be difficult to engage with representatives from Transnistrian region on these terms.

The EU's policy and its impact on the conflict

The settlement of the Republic of Moldova/Transnistria conflict appears very high on the agenda of the EU and is referred to in the respective documents. So far, the EU's impact on resolving the conflict has been limited because of (i) the prioritisation of the EU internal security concerns, (ii) EU inter-institutional responsibility sharing and lack of co-ordination (EU Special Representative reports to the Council of the European Union, development assistance is managed by the Commission etc), (iii) the EU's commitment to support already ongoing initiatives regardless of their capacity to deliver in the peace process and (iv) the ad-hoc application of the EU's approach of engaging with unrecognised

² To access the study that John Beyer presented, please go here:

<http://www.saferworld.org.uk/smartweb/resources/view-resource/556>

³ To access the study that Roxana Cristescu presented, please go here:

http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/CSDN/CSDN_Romania_CaseStudy_Moldova.pdf

entities. In this respect, the fact that the revised ENP specifically mentions that the EU should reach out to break-away regions is a welcome development.

The termination of the mandate of the EU Special Representatives has resulted in a loss of capacity on behalf of the EU. However, the fact that Miroslav Lajčák is now both the negotiator in the Association Agreement with Republic of Moldova and the observer in the 5 + 2 talks, promises a more co-ordinated response on the EU side.

The fact that the EU delegation in Chisinau is now involved in donor co-ordination is a very positive development. However it would be useful if coordination would also occur at the political level. In this sense, it was highlighted that the German initiative towards Russia could be brought in line with an overall approach of the EU so that it does not undermine or contradict the role of the EU in the conflict.

Recommendations:

- There is a need for high-level engagement on behalf of the EU with both parties as well as Russia and Ukraine;
- The EU needs to increase political staffing with conflict expertise both at the EU Delegation in Chisinau and in Brussels;
- The EU should support the Republic of Moldova in developing strategies for reintegration; (conversely, some participants thought that the EU should not support reintegration strategies);
- The EU should better communicate its activities to people living on both sides of the Bank and should support media outreach that clarifies myths;
- The EU should proactively engage representatives from Transnistria in all negotiations that are currently undertaken, for instance the DCFTA;
- The EU should support research on conflict dynamics undertaken by civil society from both banks and use their expertise to support effectiveness of the expert groups;
- The EU should provide financial means to implement measures agreed upon by the expert groups.

Case study session: The Western Balkans

The case study session on the Western Balkans included presentations given by Filip Pavlović and Geert Luteijn, NGO Fractal⁴, Jitske Hoogenboom, IKV Pax Christi⁵ and Dion van den Berg, IKV Pax Christi⁶ and was followed by a debate facilitated by Dragana Šarengaća, NDC Serbia.

⁴ To access the study that was presented by Geert Luteijn and Filip Pavlović, please go here: http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/CSDN/CSDN_Romania_PolicyAnalysis_Serbia_CrossborderCooperation.pdf

⁵ To access the study that was presented by Jitske Hoogenboom, please go here: http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/CSDN/CSDN_Romania_PolicyAnalysis_EUasPeacebuilderinKosovo.pdf

⁶ To access the study that was presented by Dion van den Berg, please go here: http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/CSDN/CSDN_Romania_DiscussionPaper_PeacebuildinginEUenlargement.pdf

Conflict dynamics and political context in the Western Balkans

The countries in the Western Balkans are still recovering from the recent conflicts and while negative peace is reached, positive peace has not been attained yet. In this respect, it is especially the issues of dealing with the past that have to be addressed. It should also be clear that the peacebuilding efforts will have to continue once the countries of the Western Balkans have joined the EU.

The EU accession process and its effect on conflict dynamics

The EU accession process has so far not sufficiently addressed the issue of peacebuilding. The EU should increase its peacebuilding potential and use its leverage to support solutions that facilitate daily life for people while at the same time facilitating reconciliation on the interstate level through political dialogue.

To prevent the EU accession process from having negative impacts on the conflict dynamics in the region, it is important that the EU acts consistently and clearly communicates the standards that need to be met in order to move forward in the accession process. Some participants believed it would be desirable for the EU to have a united approach towards the status of Kosovo. The current disagreement is hampering the effectiveness of the EU to build peace in Kosovo (especially in the North of Kosovo). Other participants disagreed with these ideas.

Recommendations

- It should be recognized that people are at the centre of the peacebuilding process;
- The peacebuilding potential of cross-border co-operation should be exploited;
- Strengthening the effectiveness of EULEX, especially in Northern Kosovo, should be prioritised;
- Support should be granted especially to municipal level and participatory decision-making procedures;
- The EU should grant specific support to projects that engage communities;
- The EU's institution-building policies should be widened to adequately acknowledge the crucial role of citizens and civil society;
- Extra funding for peacebuilding activities should be provided under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood and in EU Enlargement Policy

The session started with a summary of the main points from the two case study sessions which were provided by Madalina Mocan, Ratiu Center for the session on the Republic of Moldova and Luljeta Vunijqi, KGSC for the session on the Western Balkans. The two presentations were followed by an interactive debate which was used to move from analysis to recommendations and provide recommendations to EU policy makers, Member State governments and civil society. It was chaired by Catherine Woollard, EPLO.

Recommendations

- For the EU to be an effective foreign policy actor, it needs to have a coherent approach towards conflicts in the Western Balkans and the Eastern Neighbourhood; in this respect, the increase of nationalist discourse inside the EU may compromise the EU's effectiveness;
- As a peace project in itself, the EU should increase its peacebuilding impact by exporting some of the elements the project is based on e.g. equal representation, continuous dialogue and negotiation etc;
- In discussing conflict dynamics and peacebuilding in both the Western Balkans and the Eastern Neighbourhood, the need for conflict sensitivity on behalf of all actors (governmental and non-governmental) should be stressed;
- Stronger monitoring systems need to be put into place to ensure that EU assistance is used effectively and for the purpose it was given;
- EU funding has to be made both more flexible and more easily accessible to ensure that civil society working on peacebuilding can be supported in a timely manner;
- The EU should consider establishing initiatives similar to the EU joint co-operation initiative in Crimea (which brings together thirteen EU Member States and is an example of a successful EU initiative for conflict prevention) in other regions of the Eastern Neighbourhood;
- As EU policy makers, Member States should support peace in the neighbourhood, for example, Poland in their role as Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2011;
- The EU should work with Ukraine in preparation of and during its Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2013 to play a constructive role in the Republic of Moldova/Transnistria conflict;
- The EU should provide a mechanism for civil society input and consultation in the annual progress reports of the Neighbourhood countries, similar to the one that is already in place for the Accession countries;
- EU programmes and policies should reflect the importance that dealing with the past constitutes for the Western Balkans; in this respect, the RECOM initiatives needs to be supported more strongly by the EU;
- Learning from the previous accession round, decentralisation and autonomy within the Western Balkans have to be balanced with integration into wider governance structures such as the EU;
- Innovative ways should be explored to focus on increased accountability of CSDP missions to civil society in the countries where they are deployed.

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](#).