

Dear Sir, Madam,

We are writing to you with regards to the first planned meeting of the Joint EU-AU Expert Group Meeting on the implementation of the Partnership on Peace and Security of the EU-Africa Joint Strategy scheduled to take place in Addis Ababa on 18 November. We understand that participants at this meeting are going to decide on the main priorities from the Peace and Security Partnership to be carried out in the months to come. We would like to contribute to this debate and are therefore submitting the enclosed document, highlighting the areas we consider the most important and proposing ways to implement commitments within them.

We would also like to remind you that civil society, in Europe and in Africa, is willing to contribute to the implementation of the Partnership on Peace and Security and would like to be involved in the discussions currently taking place both in Brussels and in Addis Ababa. Indeed, due to their expertise and their work on the ground, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) can formulate and implement crisis management policies as well as peacebuilding strategies: they have the technical capacity to provide meaningful policy advice and often have privileged access to local communities, which can increase the impact and effectiveness of interventions.

We also would like to call on the European Union (EU) to put more emphasis on the peace aspect of the Peace and Security Partnership. Thus far it appears that a lot more attention has been given to military and security capabilities to the detriment of non-military aspects of conflict prevention and peace building. Preventive civilian efforts must be accorded clear priority as improved military and security capabilities do not necessarily lead to improved peace and sustainable development. We therefore strongly suggest that resources dedicated to the civil aspects of this partnership are comparable to those being invested in its military aspects. Moreover, ongoing support for enhanced military and security capabilities should be made conditional on verifiable adherence to principles of accountable and responsible democratic governance on the part of African partners.

We believe that the enclosed recommendations and suggestions would actually contribute to the full implementation of the Peace and Security Partnership and are looking forward to developing them with you in the near future.

We remain at your disposal should you wish any further information,

Regards,

First joint EU–AU Experts Group meeting on the implementation of the Partnership on Peace and Security under the EU – Africa Joint Strategy

Civil Society Recommendations

We would like to draw your attention to the following priority actions and activities for the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security, agreed by EU and AU Member States at the Lisbon Summit and contained in the First Action Plan (2008-2010) attached to the Africa – EU Strategy.

PRIORITY 1

Enhance dialogue on challenges to peace and security

AGREED ACTIVITIES:

Hold a systematic and regular dialogue on all issues related to peace and security at technical, senior official and political levels in the most effective format. This dialogue could also include innovative tools such as conflict sensitivity analysis

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Enhance the sharing of analyses and reports on crisis and conflict situations, including on their root causes and put in place the required security arrangements for the exchange of sensitive information

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ⇒ We would like to **emphasise the need to understand the root causes and drivers of conflict** prior to any actions or interventions. Undertaking a systematic conflict analysis could help the EU to better understand the profile, actors and dynamics of a conflict and adapt its intervention accordingly. Part of this conflict analysis could be an assessment of the impact of all EU policies and aid on existing or latent conflicts. Whenever possible joint assessment should be carried by the EU and the AU; it is also important to use the expertise of local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), think-tanks and research institutes in assessments. The EC choice of the Sahel Region for “a first joint assessment in the field of collective security and preventive diplomacy with a view to anticipating security challenges there” is a good opportunity. This assessment should take into account previous conflict analyses in the Sahel and building on the existing knowledge base.

- ⇒ We strongly call on **donors to improve their coordination** in the spirit of the Accra Summit Conclusions, and develop common goals and definitions of peacebuilding and nation building, and common strategic frameworks, i.e. common approaches and agendas.

AGREED ACTIVITIES

Strengthen cooperation and enhance dialogue on issues relating to the security/development nexus, including on the identification and the use of best practices

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⇒ We call on the European Union to develop **peace and security funding mechanisms that are more effectively attuned to contributing to sustainable development**. The first step would be to provide predictable funding within a long-term framework i.e. 4 to 6 years rather than 1 to 2 years. A second step would be to mainstream peacebuilding and conflict prevention into existing financial assistance mechanisms and programmes focusing on development. Any new funding mechanism must be structured so as to provide assistance not only to military peace operations, but also to the civil society interventions upon which the overall success and sustainability of peace efforts ultimately depend. It is also important to implement the existing agreement to work together on identification of best practices, which could in turn lead to development of joint, or at the very least, compatible policy guidelines (drawing on the joint assessments described in the recommendations above).

AGREED ACTIVITIES

- *Enhance capacity building, networking, cooperation and exchange of information on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), Explosive Remnants of War and Anti-Personnel Landmines (APM) as well as fight against illicit trafficking.*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ⇒ We welcome **the announcements made by the European Commission that it will work with African mandated organisations and regional mechanisms** to continue to support the implementation of regional conventions and strategies.
- ⇒ We would further suggest that the EC ensure that its support to SALW programs focuses on creating and maintaining **high level political buy-in from governments and decision makers in Africa** on issues related to trafficking. Making SALW part of political dialogue is therefore key. Written commitments, such as national action plans on SALW, have already been made and constitute a solid base for implementing activities; the will to act on those commitments, however, is lacking. The EU should maintain pressure and regularly raise the issue when EU officials are meeting their African counterparts within the context of the Partnership.
- ⇒ **We call on the European Union to recognise the highly destabilising impact of arms supplies to conflict zones.** Where cases involving governments supplying arms to conflict zones are known and in breach of international commitments, the EU should raise such cases in political dialogue with involved governments and consider reviewing and possibly reducing its development assistance in response

PRIORITY 2

Full operationalisation of the African Peace and Security Architecture

AGREED ACTIVITIES

- *Establish and empower an EU-African civil society network capable of supporting peace and security initiative*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ⇒ We fully **support initiatives aiming at strengthen African civil society** – this can be done by funding African civil society directly, or by supporting European NGOs working to strengthen their African counterparts. Efficient lines of communication between African and European CSOs should be promoted. Particularly relevant for this Partnership is the need to create links between specialized organisations in the two continents. CSOs should be encouraged to develop common goals and objectives, with structures established to facilitate this, including a coordination mechanism to foster cooperation and concrete follow up to meetings of expert groups.
- ⇒ We encourage the EU **to support the participation of European civil society in the implementation of the partnership.** We call on the EU to invite representatives of EU NGOs to take part in meeting of the European expert groups, to share the views of non governmental organisations and contribute to the debates
- ⇒ We request that funding should be specifically earmarked and allocated to civil-society led initiatives

AGREED ACTIVITIES

- *Work towards the operationalisation of the African Standby Force (ASF) and its civilian dimension, including EU support for regional brigades training, exercises, validation and logistics.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⇒ We strongly call on the EU to ensure that all military and security capacity support to the ASF complies with international best practice on democratic and accountable security sector reform (SSR), as embodied in the OECD DAC guidelines on SSR.
- ⇒ We demand that the EU do not over-emphasise building the operational capacities of the military aspects of the ASF to the detriment of its civilian dimensions. Greater support for 'Centres of expertise for Peace Support Operations training', as called for in the AU Policy Framework for the Establishment of the ASF, would be a key contribution towards rectifying the current imbalance between support to the military and civilian aspects of the ASF and in mainstreaming civilian conflict

prevention and peace building capacities across the African Peace and Security Architecture. Both African and European civil society actors should be further empowered and resourced to support such centres and training.

AGREED ACTIVITIES

- *Strengthen conflict prevention mechanisms and effective post-conflict reconstruction, including through a reinforcement of the role of women.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⇒ We feel that this crucial component of the Action Plan requires significant development if civilian aspects of peace and security are to play their requisite central role in the Partnership. We encourage the EU to support greater opportunities for African and European civil society actors to develop concrete proposals for strengthening existing mechanisms and policies, as well as for new and innovative approaches.

AGREED ACTIVITIES

- *Enhance capacity-building, networking and collaboration between the AU and the EU, regarding the implementation of the AU Policy on post conflict reconstruction and development*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⇒ We would like to recall that early warning analysis, peacebuilding activities, good offices missions, and coordination of security and development policies need to be carried out by professional permanent African Union Personnel and the EU's support should be aimed at building this capacity.
- ⇒ We would like to emphasise the need for training as we consider it crucial in this context. European and African CSOs have acquired extensive experience and knowledge in developing, organizing and leading training exercises, including conferences and seminars, to the benefit of both non-governmental and governmental agencies. Several initiatives are currently taking place on training that combine the expertise of CSOs and the resources of institutions, including the African Union and several economic regions. These workshops constitute excellent examples of how CSOs can support the Partnership by involving all relevant non-governmental and governmental actors from Europe, Africa and also the UN. They are key resources and could, on occasion, be easily integrated in the framework of the Africa-EU Partnership on Peace and Security, specifically in connection with envisaged EU support of AU training activities.

PRIORITY 3

Predictable funding for Africa-led peace support operations

AGREED ACTIVITIES

- *Take steps towards the establishment of a predictable and sustainable funding mechanism, building on the experience of the APF and EU and AU Member States' bilateral contributions.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ⇒ While we welcome the foreseen approval of a second APF, covering the period 2008-2010, we believe more has to be done to ensure the predictability of funding, which was argued for in the Action Plan as well as at the Accra Summit on Aid Effectiveness. Nonetheless, we would like to stress that we find it regrettable that the focus of the first APF was on military interventions with little or no room for the deployment or training of civilians to undertake either peacekeeping or peacebuilding work. Therefore we would welcome an increased allocation to building the AU's capacity to work on civilian alternatives. This would be in line with the purpose of the EDF; funding for military operations should be taken from other sources.

- ⇒ In implementation of activities the Partnership should also take advantage of the work done by the UN, and particularly the creation of a Panel of the Wise under the leadership of former EC President Romano Prodi to consider lessons from past and current AU peacekeeping efforts and explore possible options to enhance the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of resources for AU peacekeeping operations. The Partnership should build on what the UN Panel is doing, inform and integrate the recommendations that it provides, and maintain the channels of communications and dialogue that it establishes.

EPLO MEMBERS

Berghof Research Center
for Constructive Conflict
Management

Civil Society Conflict
Prevention Network—
KATU

Crisis Management
Initiative—CMI

European Network for
Civil Peace Services—
EN.CPS

European Centre for
Conflict Prevention—ECCP

ESSEC Iréné

Fundación para las
Relaciones
Internacionales y el
Diálogo Exterior—FRIDE

German Platform for
Peaceful Conflict
Management

International Alert

International Center for
Transitional Justice—ICTJ

International Crisis Group

International Security
Information Service -
ISIS Europe

Interpeace

Kvinna till Kvinna

Life and Peace Institute

Nansen Dialogue Network

Nonviolent Peaceforce

Partners for Democratic
Change International—
PDCI

Pax Christi International

Quaker Council for
European Affairs—QCEA

Saferworld

Search for Common
Ground

Swisspeace

Toledo International
Centre for Peace—CITpax

World Vision

THE EUROPEAN PEACEBUILDING LIAISON OFFICE EPLO

EPLO is the platform of European NGOs, networks of NGOs and think tanks active in the field of peacebuilding, who share an interest in promoting sustainable peacebuilding policies among decision-makers in the European Union.

EPLO's Objectives Are:

- To increase the capacity of the EU to design and implement coherent measures that promote sustainable peace in conflict prone and affected countries and hold it accountable to its own political commitments of helping secure peace within and outside its borders.
- To raise awareness within the EU of the links between peacebuilding, the eradication of poverty, and sustainable development world-wide and the critical role of civil society in meeting these challenges.
- To engage and support member organisations across the EU advocating towards and implementing with EU decision-makers and other NGO sectors.

How EPLO Works:

EPLO works on the added value principle and so conducts its advocacy and implementation through structured decision-making. It advocates its ideas by developing common positions and promotes these towards the EU. EPLO engages in the implementation of projects together with its member organisations and EU institutions/ EU Member States.

The *General Assembly* meets twice a year and is EPLO's decision-making body. The *Steering Committee* is elected for a 2 year term. The *Secretariat* provides services to member organisations and EU officials and implements EPLO's policy and projects. EPLO structures the input, policy interests and project work of its member organisations through working groups. Currently EPLO focuses on 3 themes: civilian capabilities; EU financial frameworks; and conflict sensitivity of relevant EU policies and their implementation (e.g. security, development, gender, justice, trade or environment).

EPLO is funded by its member organisations with additional support from various EU institutions, foundations and national governments.

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