

EPLO CONFLICT PREVENTION NEWSLETTER

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EU UPDATE

Council of the EU

The Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) had an extraordinary meeting on 17 January to discuss the latest events in Mali. It also met on 31 January and 18 February.

On 31 January, it adopted conclusions on Mali, Somalia, closer co-operation and regional integration in the Maghreb, and EU support for sustainable change in transition societies. It also:

- examined the state of play on the Arab Spring and took stock of the EU's response
- discussed recent events in Egypt and the latest developments in Syria
- amended Regulation 1210/2003 concerning specific restrictions on economic and financial relations with Iraq
- extended the validity of national permits for the entry and stay of certain Palestinians in the EU for a further 12 months
- amended the restrictive measures in view of the situation in Afghanistan so as to take account of decisions taken by the United Nations (UN)
- approved the six-monthly report on the implementation of the EU strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, covering the second semester of 2012
- extended sanctions against persons responsible for the misappropriation of Tunisian state funds by 12 months
- approved the EU crisis management exercise programme for 2013-2015
- approved the crisis management concept for a possible civilian Common Security and Development Policy (CSDP) border security mission in Libya (see Page 2)
- eased the EU's restrictive measures against Zimbabwe
- strengthened the EU's restrictive measures against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

On 18 February it adopted conclusions on Mali, the Eastern Partnership, Syria, Zimbabwe, the DPRK, the EU's priorities at UN human rights forums, and the European Court of Auditors Special Report No. 18/2012 on 'European Union Assistance to Kosovo related to the rule of law'. It also:

- discussed the situation in Iraq and how the EU can contribute to promoting stability in the country
- took stock of developments in the Middle East Peace Process and discussed in particular how the EU can contribute to the resumption on direct negotiations between the parties in the Middle East
- eased the EU's restrictive measures against Zimbabwe
- strengthened the EU's restrictive measures against the DPRK

The General Affairs Council (GAC) met on 4 February. It:

- had an exchange of views on the Irish presidency's work programme for the duration of its term (January-July 2013)
- examined draft conclusions for the European Council meeting to be held on 7-8 February
- examined a draft annotated agenda for the European Council meeting to be held on 14-15 March (including external relations and relations with strategic partners)
- decided not to object to the adoption by the European Commission (EC) of a regulation removing Azerbaijan and Iran from the list of countries benefiting from the EU's general system of tariff preferences (GSP)
- decided not to object to the adoption by the EC of a regulation establishing rules of procedure for granting, under the GSP, a special incentive arrangement for sustainable development and good governance ("GSP+")

Click [here](#) to read the FAC conclusions from 17 January, [here](#) to read the FAC conclusions from 31 January, [here](#) to read the FAC conclusions from 18 February, and [here](#) to read the GAC conclusions from 4 February.

EU UPDATE (CONTINUED)

European Council

The European Council met on 7-8 February. EU heads of state and government adopted conclusions on the EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020, trade, the Arab Spring and Mali.

Click [here](#) to read the European Council conclusions on the MFF and [here](#) to read the European Council conclusions on trade and external relations.

Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)

On 17 January, the FAC established a CSDP mission to support the training and reorganisation of the Malian Armed Forces. It also appointed Brigadier General François Lecointre (France) as EU mission commander and estimated the common costs of the operation at € 12.3 million for the mandate of 15 months.

On 22 January, the Council of the EU extended the EU training mission in Somalia (EUTM Somalia) for two years. It also announced that Brigadier General Gerald Aherne (Ireland) will take over the command and that the common costs of the operation until 31 March 2015 are estimated at € 11.6 million.

On 31 January, the FAC approved the crisis management concept for a possible new civilian CSDP mission to support capacity building for border management in Libya.

On 18 February, the FAC launched the CSDP mission to support the training and reorganisation of the Malian Armed Forces (EUTM Mali). According to the press release, 'EUTM Mali will provide advice and military training to the Malian Armed Forces, including on command and control, logistics and human resources as well as on international humanitarian law, the protection of civilians and human rights. The mission will not be involved in combat operations.'

Click [here](#) to read the press release about the extension and refocusing of EUTM Somalia, [here](#) to read the press release about the approval of the concept note for a mission to support capacity building for border management in Libya, [here](#) to download the press release about the launch of EUTM Mali, and [here](#) to read the latest issue of 'EU Security and Defence News'.

European External Action Service (EEAS)

On 17 January, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), Catherine Ashton, announced that the EU would open a delegation to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Burma) and a delegation to the United Arab Emirates.

On 21 January, HR Ashton directed the EU Military Staff to activate the 'Clearing House' mechanism to support the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA). According to the press release, 'The aim of the EU 'Clearing House' is to assist AFISMA in reaching the operational strength necessary for the immediate transportation of AFISMA contingents, but also in the longer term to provide logistical support to AFISMA's engagement in Mali – including for the transportation of equipment, personnel and ammunition – in the coming months. It highlights the EU's willingness to support AFISMA.'

On 5 February, HR Ashton announced the appointment of Vygaudas Usackas (Lithuania) as the new Head of Delegation (HoD) to the Russian Federation. Since 2010, Mr Usackas has been Head of the EU Delegation and EU Special Representative in Afghanistan.

Click [here](#) to read the press release about the opening of the two new EU delegations, [here](#) to read the press release about the activation of the 'Clearing House' mechanism to support AFISMA, and [here](#) to read the press release about the appointment of the new HoD to the Russian Federation.

European Commission (EC)

On 5 February, the EC published a proposal for a directive on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing.

On 7 February, the EC and the EEAS published a joint communication on the EU cybersecurity strategy entitled 'An Open, Safe and Secure Cyberspace'.

On 8 February, the EC published a report on Kosovo's progress in fulfilling the requirements of the visa liberalisation roadmap.

On 14 February, the EC published a proposal for a directive on implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of financial transaction tax.

On 26 February, the EC published a communication on the simplification of EU funding entitled 'Second Simplification Scoreboard for the MFF 2014-2020'.

On 27 February, the EC published a communication on the post-2015 development framework entitled 'A Decent Life for All: Ending poverty and giving the world a sustainable future.'

Click [here](#) to read the documents which were published by the EC in February.

European Parliament (EP)

The EP had plenary sessions on 14-17 January and 4-7 February. In January, it adopted resolutions on the EU strategy for the Horn of Africa, the situation in the Central African Republic, the human rights situation in Bahrain, violence against women in India, the state of play of EU-Mercosur trade relations, the recommendations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference regarding the establishment of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction, the implementation of the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Eastern and Southern Africa States, and the EU-Iraq Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

In February, it adopted resolutions on corporate social responsibility, the 57th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, recent attacks on medical aid workers in Pakistan, the detention of human rights activists in Zimbabwe, the disappearance of the civil society leader Sombath Somphone in Laos, the 2011 Annual Report of the European Investment Bank, and the 22nd session of the UN Human Rights Council.

Click [here](#) to read the resolutions which were adopted by the EP in January and February.

UPCOMING EU EVENTS

Next European Council meeting: 14-15 March 2013, Brussels

Next Foreign Affairs Council meeting: 11 March 2013, Brussels

Next European Parliament plenary session: 11-14 March, Strasbourg

EU PRESS RELEASES

President of the European Council

- 18 February 2013 – [Speech by President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy at the European Parliament](#)
- 15 February 2013 – [Op-Ed by President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy: 'A budget for the future'](#)
- 15 January 2013 – [Address by President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy to the Young People's event at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in co-operation with the Anna Lindh Foundation](#)

Click [here](#) to read all the latest press releases from President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy.

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR)

- 28 February 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the 10th anniversary of the beginning of the Darfur conflict](#)
- 27 February 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton following the E3+3 talks with Iran](#)
- 27 February 2013 – [Joint Announcement by HR Catherine Ashton and the Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Dr Jalili](#)
- 25 February 2013 – [Joint Statement by HR Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Andris Piebalgs on the adoption of a "Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region"](#)
- 21 February 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the visit of Sudanese President Al-Bashir to Chad](#)
- 21 February 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton after the fifth meeting in the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue](#)
- 20 February 2013 – [Joint Statement by HR Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle on elections in Armenia](#)
- 20 February 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton following the resignation of Mr Hamadi Jebali in Tunisia](#)
- 19 February 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court by Côte d'Ivoire](#)
- 15 February 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the latest developments in the Maldives](#)
- 13 February 2013 – [Remarks by HR Catherine Ashton at the UN Security Council: Cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations](#)
- 12 February 2013 – [Joint Statement by HR Catherine Ashton and UN Special Representative Leila Zerrougui on the occasion of the International Day against the Use of Child Soldiers](#)
- 12 February 2013 – [Declaration by HR Catherine Ashton on behalf of the EU on the nuclear test by the DPRK](#)
- 11 February 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the launch of National Dialogue in Bahrain](#)
- 9 February 2013 – [Joint Statement by the spokespersons of HR Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle on developments in Georgia](#)
- 9 February 2013 – [Joint Statement by the spokespersons of HR Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle, on recent events in Azerbaijan](#)
- 7 February 2013 – [Remarks by HR Catherine Ashton at press conference on the launch of the EU's Cyber Security Strategy](#)
- 6 February 2013 – [Joint Statement on the International Day against Female Genital Mutilation](#)
- 2 February 2013 – [Address by HR Catherine Ashton at the Munich Security Conference panel: What future for the Euro-Atlantic security community?](#)
- 24 January 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton, following the adoption by the UN Security Council of Resolution 2087 on North Korea](#)
- 24 January 2013 – [Joint Statement by HR Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Štefan Füle on the parliamentary elections in Jordan](#)
- 24 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the EU Election Observation Mission to observe the general elections in Kenya](#)
- 19 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on Madagascar](#)
- 19 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on support for democracy in Pakistan](#)
- 18 January 2013 – [Declaration by HR Catherine Ashton on behalf of the EU on the impeachment of Sri Lankan Chief Justice](#)
- 17 January 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton after the fourth meeting in the framework of the EU-facilitated dialogue](#)
- 16 January 2013 – [Speech by Minister of State for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton on behalf of HR Catherine Ashton on the recommendations of the Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference regarding the establishment of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction](#)
- 16 January 2013 – [Speech by Minister of State for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton on behalf of HR Catherine Ashton on the EU-Iraq partnership](#)
- 16 January 2013 – [Speech by Minister of State for European Affairs Lucinda Creighton on behalf of HR Catherine Ashton on the situation in Syria](#)
- 15 January 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the situation in Mali](#)
- 15 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on fighting in the Kachin State in Myanmar](#)
- 14 January 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the latest developments in Mali](#)
- 12 January 2013 – [Joint Statement by HR Catherine Ashton, Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva and Commissioner Andris Piebalgs on the third anniversary of Haiti earthquake](#)

EU PRESS RELEASES (CONTINUED)

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR) – continued

- 11 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the Central African Republic](#)
- 11 January 2013 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the situation in Mali](#)
- 11 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the suspension of political dialogue with the Gambia](#)
- 8 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the recent closure of civil society organisations in Sudan](#)
- 4 January 2013 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the Summit between the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan](#)
- 29 December 2012 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the modification of the scope of the Colombian military justice system](#)
- 25 December 2012 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the referendum in Egypt](#)
- 24 December 2012 – [Statement by HR Catherine Ashton on the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty](#)
- 23 December 2012 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the destruction of historical heritage in Mali](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on Mali](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [Statement by the spokesperson of HR Catherine Ashton on the situation in the Central African Republic](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [Joint Statement by HR Catherine Ashton and the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov on the Middle East Peace Process](#)

Click [here](#) to read all the latest press releases from HR Catherine Ashton.

Council of the EU

- 28 February 2013 – [EU sanctions against the Syrian regime extended](#)
- 25 February 2013 – [Joint Statement: 16th EU-Ukraine Summit](#)
- 7 February 2013 – [The EU's response to the "Arab Spring": The State-of-Play after Two Years](#)
- 27 January 2013 – [EU-CELAC Action Plan 2013-2015](#)
- 5 February 2013 – [EU hosts a ministerial meeting of the Support and Follow-Up Group on the situation in Mali](#)
- 24 January 2013 – [Joint Statement: Sixth Brazil-EU Summit](#)
- 9 January 2013 – [European Endowment for Democracy – additional support for democratic change](#)

Click [here](#) to read all the latest press releases from the Council of the EU.

European Commission (EC)

- 28 February 2013 – [EU hosts meeting on cooperation with Ukraine and Eastern Partnership](#)
- 27 February 2013 – [EU to take leading role in global fight against poverty and strive for sustainable development](#)
- 26 February 2013 – [Joint statement by the Heads of Mission of the European Union, the OSCE, and the United States in Skopje](#)
- 26 February 2013 – [The EU strengthens its joint development strategy in Mali and steps up its response](#)
- 25 February 2013 – [EU-Albania: Elections will be crucial test of democracy](#)
- 20 February 2013 – [Commissioner Andris Piebalgs to launch new food security and energy projects during his visit to Burundi](#)
- 19 February 2013 – [€ 50 million of Macro-Financial Assistance for Bosnia and Herzegovina, more concrete reforms expected](#)
- 19 February 2013 – [Responding to the humanitarian crisis, supporting recovery and promoting development: How Europe is helping Mali and the Sahel](#)
- 19 February 2013 – [Mali: EU allocates an extra € 22 million in humanitarian aid to victims of conflict](#)
- 18 February 2013 – [New EU initiative to fight organised crime and human trafficking at EU borders](#)
- 15 February 2013 – [Statement by Commissioner Štefan Füle on the political situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#)
- 12 February 2013 – [EU and Georgia signed financing agreement to support reform process](#)
- 12 February 2013 – [Remarks by Commissioner Štefan Füle at the Informal Eastern Partnership dialogue in Tbilisi](#)
- 7 February 2013 – [Speech by Commissioner Štefan Füle at the Conference with Civil Society \(Eastern Partnership National Platform\) and professors/students of Mohyla Academy](#)
- 6 February 2013 – [Dialogue for a peaceful solution of the Kurdish issue in Turkey](#)
- 30 January 2013 – [Speech by Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva: 'A collective effort to support the victims of Syria's crisis – the European Union's humanitarian work'](#)
- 30 January 2013 – [Commissioner Andris Piebalgs participates in the UN panel on post-2015 development agenda](#)
- 29 January 2013 – [Speech by Commissioner Štefan Füle: Western Balkans on their road towards the European Union](#)

EU PRESS RELEASES (CONTINUED)

European Commission (EC) – continued

- 29 January 2013 – [Syrian crisis: EU pledges € 100 million for humanitarian aid](#)
- 29 January 2013 – [Donor Conference on Mali: EU pledges € 50 million to support an African-led peace operation \(AFISMA\)](#)
- 28 January 2013 – [Afghanistan: New EU funding to improve health services for 14 million people and support farmers](#)
- 24 January 2013 – [Statement by Commissioner Štefan Füle at the press conference with the Council of Europe](#)
- 22 January 2013 – [The European Commission boosts its humanitarian aid in Mali as crisis response Commissioner visits the country to assess needs](#)
- 17 January 2013 – [EU steps up support for resolution of the crisis in Mali](#)
- 16 January 2013 – [Statement by Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva on the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Syria](#)
- 15 January 2013 – [New European Union assistance for the Palestinian people](#)
- 11 January 2013 – [Haiti earthquake three years on: EU gives an additional € 30.5 million in humanitarian aid](#)
- 10 January 2013 – [€ 65 million to support reforms in Kosovo](#)
- 10 January 2013 – [Where the European Commission's humanitarian aid will go in 2013](#)
- 10 January 2013 – [New EU initiative to combat piracy in the Gulf of Guinea](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [Lebanon: € 125 million euros for highway and clean energy](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [EU support to Ukraine for energy reform and local development](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [Renewed EU support for reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [Renewed EU funding to support on-going reforms in Serbia](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [The European Union resumes development cooperation with Guinea](#)
- 21 December 2012 – [Statement by Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva on the new outbreak of conflict in the Central African Republic](#)

Click [here](#) to read all the latest press releases from the European Commission.

European Parliament (EP)

- 22 February 2013 – [External policy: EU must raise its game or become irrelevant, say MEPs](#)
- 21 February 2013 – [European defence industry: strategic independence before competitiveness](#)
- 19 February 2013 – [Croatia ready to become 28th member state, say MEPs](#)
- 19 February 2013 – [Post-crisis challenges in Mali and Syria discussed with Commissioner Georgieva](#)
- 19 February 2013 – [Armenia's 2013 presidential elections: calm but no real competition](#)
- 18 February 2013 – [Parliament ready to negotiate on EU long-term budget](#)
- 14 February 2013 – [Syrian refugees in Jordan: EP delegation calls for EU to continue support](#)
- 7 February 2013 – [Human rights: Pakistan, Laos and Zimbabwe](#)
- 7 February 2013 – [New horizon for Kosovo's EU integration](#)
- 7 February 2013 – [Tangible results expected from Turkish government talks with PKK](#)
- 6 February 2013 – [Irish Presidency priorities as presented in EP committees](#)
- 6 February 2013 – [Threats to democracy are "unacceptable" says Tunisia's President Moncef Marzouki](#)
- 6 February 2013 – [Slashing development aid would hurt world's poorest, MEPs warn](#)
- 31 January 2013 – [EU aid to Somalia should focus on institution building, its President tells MEPs](#)
- 24 January 2013 – [Mali: MEPs urge member states to go in alongside France](#)
- 23 January 2013 – ["No alternative to dialogue" between Serbia and Kosovo, says Serbia's Deputy PM](#)
- 22 January 2013 – [Montenegro on track for EU membership, say Foreign Affairs Committee MEPs](#)
- 17 January 2013 – [Human rights: violence against women in India; crackdown in Bahrain; insecurity in Central African Republic](#)
- 17 January 2013 – [Parliament backs free access to EU market for four African countries](#)
- 17 January 2013 – [Parliament backs historic EU partnership agreement with Iraq](#)
- 16 January 2013 – [Syria: MEPs question international community strategy](#)
- 16 January 2013 – [Mali: France must get European backing, says Parliament](#)

Click [here](#) to read all the latest press releases from the European Parliament.

THE EU AND THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

By Catherine Woollard – Executive Director, EPLO

(NB/ Unless otherwise stated, the views expressed are those of the author.)

Background

The European Commission and the European External Action Service are currently developing a communication on the EU's comprehensive approach to external action.

In January 2013, EPLO organised a Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) policy meeting on 'The EU's Comprehensive Approach to External Action: Gathering Civil Society Input'.

The following article is an abridged version of a background document which the EPLO office prepared in advance of that meeting.

1. What does the Comprehensive Approach mean for the EU?

The expression "Comprehensive Approach" is used by many people to mean many different things. In recent debates, two definitions have been used by EU policy-makers, one broad and one narrower.

The broad understanding

The broader understanding of the Comprehensive Approach for the EU is an integrated EU approach towards a third country or towards another region or group of countries. An integrated approach means that the EU has a set of objectives developed by and agreed to by all relevant EU institutions and it then has policies, "tools", and activities to implement these objectives. Both the objectives and the activities may be contained in a strategy towards the country or region in question. The expression "a whole-of-EU approach" is also used to describe the broader understanding of the Comprehensive Approach; it draws on concepts of "whole-of-government" approaches and efforts to unify the United Nations (UN) (e.g. "one UN at country level" and lead agency policies).

The narrower understanding

There is also a narrower understanding of the Comprehensive Approach for the EU, which defines it as civil-military integration. This understanding implicitly or explicitly limits the Comprehensive Approach to crisis management. It is similar in some respects to the definitions of a Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management used by NATO (although for NATO, as a military alliance, the focus on the Comprehensive Approach is on co-operation with external civilian actors whereas for the EU a Comprehensive Approach to crisis management is firstly internal – concerned with bringing together the military and civilian components of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). A Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management is already part of EU policy, as set out in the Council conclusions of December 2008.

A comprehensive approach to what...

The Comprehensive Approach discussion is further confused by disagreement over the object of the comprehensive approach. Within a broader definition, the focus of the Comprehensive Approach is external – it can be described as follows: The comprehensive approach OF the EU TOWARDS a particular country or region.

This paper uses the short-hand "an EU Comprehensive Approach" for the above definition. In narrower definitions, the Comprehensive Approach remains internal, (e.g. the Comprehensive Approach to crisis management, mentioned above, or the comprehensive approach to crisis response, to conflict prevention etc.).

Beyond Crisis Response

Limiting the EU's Comprehensive Approach to crisis response would also render it too narrow to be useful. Responding to crises is one small part of the EU's external action and is also an area that will always prove difficult for the EU, given the complexity of its decision-making procedures. A Comprehensive Approach that enables the EU to be more effective at preventive action would play to its advantages.

In addition, there is a risk that the process of developing an EU Comprehensive Approach is hijacked by a separate debate about the role of the EEAS in crisis response. It would be useful to disentangle these two issues. The involvement of the EEAS in crisis response, including response to humanitarian disasters, and in particular the attempts by the EEAS to coordinate all EU response to crises, again including humanitarian assistance, is controversial. Rightly or wrongly, there are suspicions that a new communication on the Comprehensive Approach is an attempt to consolidate the crisis response role of the EEAS.

...in order to meet which objectives?

The objectives of EU external action are set out in the Lisbon Treaty and include the following:

- 'promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples' (Article 3.1)
- 'preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security' (Article 21.2(c)).

The purpose of an EU Comprehensive Approach is to enable the EU to better meet these objectives.

2. Depth of the EU Comprehensive Approach

Integration, coordination, cooperation, communication

There are different understandings of the depth of a comprehensive approach. EPLO has previously drawn a distinction between integration and coordination. To this could be added other relationships between actors in conflict-affected countries:

- **Integration:** All relevant institutions are brought together to develop common objectives and strategies and then work jointly towards meeting them.
- **Coordination:** Different institutions develop their own objectives and work towards meeting them but coordinate, that is, share information (usually at coordination meetings) about what they are separately doing.
- **Co-operation:** Different actors (not necessarily all part of the EU) work together but are not part of the same institutional structures and do not (necessarily) share overall objectives and strategies.
- **Communication:** Different actors provide information about what they are each doing.

3. EU policies and actors to be part of an EU Comprehensive Approach

Ideally the comprehensive approach would cover all EU external

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policy areas (e.g. taking a truly Comprehensive Approach to country X in EU external action implies that all policies with an external dimension should be included in it). This is highly unrealistic given the battle to ensure that some policies remain outside the Comprehensive Approach. Certain policies remain “untouchable”. For instance, despite the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, trade tends to remain a separate policy area.

An EU Comprehensive Approach could include the *integration* of EU external policies and *coordination* with other EU policies which have an external dimension or implications for EU external action. Thus, integration of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CFSP), development, humanitarian assistance and coordination with trade, fisheries; justice, freedom and security, etc.

Partially external actors: The Member States

The inclusion of the EU Member States in an EU Comprehensive Approach has various dimensions:

- EU Member States as decision-makers in EU policy have to be part of a Comprehensive Approach (in the sense of being part of its application by the EU).
- EU Member States as external actors with whom the EU needs to coordinate or co-operate.

The situation is fluid, however. Member States can choose the extent to which they continue to operate bilaterally in third countries compared to working through the EU system. This includes decisions on the amount of development assistance that they pool; whether or not they use the new option of joint programming of development assistance as set out in the 2011 joint EC and EEAS communication on ‘Global Europe’; whether they develop pooling and sharing options under CSDP; the number of common positions they take towards third countries on the diplomatic side; the extent to which they act as a block in international fora and so on.

Wholly external actors: third countries, civil society, international organisations

The argument has been made – many times – that the EU should focus less on questions of internal “coherence” and more on building up its relationships with external actors. In particular, with third-country governments, be they “partner” or “host country” governments or powerful states also active in countries and regions where the EU is active (some of which are now grouped as “strategic partners”). In addition, the EU has committed to working with civil society in many regions and has complex working – and funding – relationships with multilateral organisations such as UN agencies and the World Bank.

There might be co-operation or coordination between the EU and the external actors but the latter cannot be part of an EU comprehensive approach given that they are independent, external actors.

4. Tools for application of a Comprehensive Approach by the EU

The EU has developed new tools for the application of a Comprehensive Approach, notably the regional strategies and programming guidelines, where country strategy papers are now one of three options.

If a Comprehensive Approach communication is agreed it will need to be accompanied by or followed by instructions and guidance on the processes for its application.

In practice, an EU Comprehensive Approach would look something like the following:

- Joint – or at least shared – analysis across the EU institutions
- Joint programming and/or planning to develop common strategies and programmes setting out shared objectives and priorities
- Division of responsibilities
- Actions: each EU institutions plays its own separate role but within the overall agreed strategy.

5. A Comprehensive Approach for the EU: dilemmas and discussion points

Opposition to the Comprehensive Approach

Opposition to the current development of the Comprehensive Approach seems to derive in part from the fear of loss of power or subversion of principles. The following can be gleaned from the public discussions:

CSDP: Certain EU Member States are concerned that an EU Comprehensive Approach broadly defined will reduce the prominence of the CSDP by integrating it as one tool within an overall EU strategy. In addition, their fear is that this will limit development of the CSDP and in particular that it will limit the development and use of the military component of the CSDP.

Humanitarian assistance: The EC’s humanitarian assistance department (ECHO) and humanitarian NGOs are concerned that an EU Comprehensive Approach will put at risk the principles of independence and impartiality that are at the heart of humanitarian work. In addition, there may be a fear that an EU Comprehensive Approach will consolidate the trend towards coordination of EU response to crises – including humanitarian crises – by the EEAS. Wider concerns about the EEAS’ involvement in EU humanitarian assistance may come into play.

Development assistance: Certain actors in development are concerned that an EU Comprehensive Approach may lead to the “politicisation” of development assistance. (NB/ It is assumed that this means the use of development assistance to meet political goals which conflict with the stated goals of development assistance.)

Is it really worth developing a new policy on the EU Comprehensive Approach?

Given the opposition described above, one could question the value of developing an EU Comprehensive Approach. In addition, it could be argued that without institutional integration, an EU Comprehensive Approach will not be possible in practice.

The institutional set up following the Lisbon Treaty missed many opportunities to create a more integrated approach by the EU, due to resistance by parts of the EC, the Member States and others. It could be argued that a Comprehensive Approach is not possible in a situation of institutional fragmentation. For example, the EU’s response to conflict is currently divided across at least five different institutions and structures, leading to duplication and time wasted in coordination. Will a new policy actually be able to change this if there is a lack of institutional integration?

The development of a communication on an EU Comprehensive Approach and its application will simply lead to a continuation of discussions on the need for “coherence” without any actual change. The argument could also be made that the Comprehensive Approach is something that you do, not something that you talk about. Finally, there is a risk that what results is simply more

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coordination (i.e. more meetings for different parts of the EU to explain what they are separately doing).

Valid concerns have also been raised that an EU Comprehensive Approach may lead to a loss of some of the more effective and principled parts of EU external action.

On the other hand, the argument can be made that the communication on an EU Comprehensive Approach (and the upcoming

review of the EEAS) are opportunities to rectify problems created by or not addressed by decisions on the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty.

Click [here](#) to read the full version of the discussion points paper on an EU Comprehensive Approach and here to read a report of the CSDN meeting on the issue.

For more information, please contact the [author](#).

JOB VACANCIES AND INTERNSHIPS

JOB VACANCIES

There are job vacancies in the [EPLO office](#).

The following EPLO member organisations also have job vacancies: [Berghof Foundation](#), [Crisis Management Initiative](#), [ESSEC IRENÉ](#), [International Center for Transitional Justice](#), [International Alert](#), [International Crisis Group](#), [Oxfam International](#), [Saferworld](#) and [World Vision International](#).

Click [here](#) to visit the 'Job Vacancies and Internships' page of the EPLO website.

INTERNSHIPS / VOLUNTEERING

The following EPLO member organisations have internship opportunities / open voluntary positions: [Budapest Centre for the International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities](#), [Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue \(HD Centre\)](#), [International Crisis Group](#), [Life & Peace Institute](#), [IKV Pax Christi](#), [Search for Common Ground](#), [swisspeace](#) and [World Vision International](#).

Click [here](#) to visit the 'Job Vacancies and Internships' page of the EPLO website.

TRAINING

The following EPLO member organisations are organising training course in the coming months: the [Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution](#), the [Forum Civil Peace Service \(forumZFD\) – Academy for Conflict Transformation](#), the [International Center for Transitional Justice](#), and the [Peace Action Training and Research Institute of Romania – International Peace and Development Training Centre](#); and [swisspeace](#).

Click [here](#) to visit the 'Training' page of the EPLO website.

PUBLICATIONS

The following EPLO member organisations have published reports and/or newsletters in January and February 2013: [Catholic Organization for Relief and Development \(Cordaid\)](#), [Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue \(HD Centre\)](#), [Conciliation Resources](#), [Crisis Management Initiative](#), [Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict](#), [International Alert](#), [International Centre for Transitional Justice](#), [International Crisis Group](#), [Life & Peace Institute](#), [Oxfam International](#), [Pax Christi International](#), [Quaker Council for European Affairs](#), [Saferworld](#), [swisspeace](#) and [World Vision International](#).

Click [here](#) to visit the 'Member Organisations' Publications' page of the EPLO website.

CIVIL SOCIETY DIALOGUE NETWORK

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a three-year project funded by the European Commission (Instrument for Stability) and aimed at facilitating dialogue on peacebuilding issues between civil society and the EU institutions. It will contribute to strengthening international and regional capacity for conflict prevention and post-conflict co-operation.

Upcoming Events

Geographic Meeting

Supporting Myanmar's evolving peace processes: What roles for civil society and the EU?
Thursday 7 March 2013, Brussels

For more information about this meeting, please contact [Antonia Potter Prentice](#).

Training Seminar

The EU and Peacebuilding
Thursday 14 March 2013, London

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

Latest Events

Policy Meeting

The EU's Comprehensive Approach to External Action: Gathering Civil Society Input
January 2012, Brussels

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

Funding Instruments Meeting

Instrument for Stability: 2013 Annual Action Programmes & 2014-2020 Strategic Programming Orientations
December 2012, Brussels

For more information about this meeting, please contact [Ben Moore](#).

Member State Meeting

Towards a comprehensive approach in EU external action: the role of France
December 2012, Paris

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

For more information about these and other CSDN events, click [here](#) to visit the 'Civil Society Dialogue Network' section of the EPLO website.

THE EU AND PEACEBUILDING: FROM EUROPEAN PEACE-BUILDING PROJECT TO GLOBAL ACTOR

The EU and Peacebuilding: From European Peace Project to Global Actor is an 18-month project funded by the European Commission (Europe for Citizens Programme). Its aim is to engage a broad range of actors, including European citizens, European civil society organisations, academic institutions, research centres and think tanks, as well as national and EU-level decision-makers in a dialogue on the EU's role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding and its history as a peace project.

Latest Event

Round-table on the EU and Peacebuilding: What role for the Netherlands?
February 2013, The Hague

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

Click [here](#) for more information about this and other events in the framework of the EU and Peacebuilding: From European Peace Project to Global Actor' project.