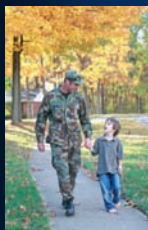
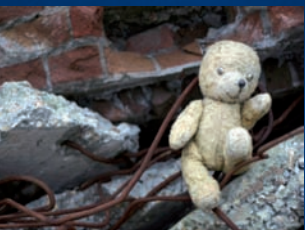


Conference report

Ljubljana, 17-18 April 2008

Increasing the Impact on the Ground EU and NGO Cooperation in the Thematic Area of Children Affected by Armed Conflict



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The Slovenian Presidency would like to thank the Center for European Perspective, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office and the European Commission for co-organising the seminar, as well as all participants for their instrumental role in making the seminar meaningful. Special thanks go to Sheila Romen, EPLO, for drafting the conference report.

Foreword

Children have a special status because they constitute the future of any society. One priority of the Slovenian EU Presidency has been children, specifically those affected by armed conflict.

The conventional approach to children has been either through a security prism, or as part of a development scenario, or in the context of humanitarian assistance, or from a human rights perspective.

Slovenia chose to aim high.

In a number of initiatives during its six months of chairing the EU Council, it sought to bring together all of these various methods into a coherent, whole-EU approach. The idea was to increase coherence among EU institutions and instruments as well as to improve cooperation with NGOs and the UN and other actors in the field of Children Affected by Armed Conflict.

As one part of this effort, the Slovenian Presidency, assisted by the Centre for European Perspective, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office and the European Commission, corralled the foremost experts in the field to Jable Castle in Slovenia in April 2008 for two days of brainstorming.

The focus was on how to improve the EU-s performance on the ground.

You hold one result of this brainstorming session in your hands.

This conference report gives an excellent overview of the proceedings. Better still, the report includes a table of concrete recommendations distilled from the discussions of those two days.

My hope is that this publication will not become just another conference report on a bookshelf gathering dust, but that the recommendations and the thinking behind them will find their way into EU policy, soon.



Riina Kionka,
*Council of the European Communities,
Personal Representative SG/HR for Human Rights*

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Acronyms

AU	African Union
CAAC	Children Affected by Armed Conflict
CEP	Centre for European Perspective
CIVCOM	Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management, Council of the EU
CIMIC	Civil-Military Cooperation
CPCC	Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability, Council of the EU
CODEV	Working Party on Development Cooperation, Council of the EU
COHOM	Working Party on Human Rights, Council of the EU
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DG ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department
DG RELEX	Directorate General External Relations, European Commission
DPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EEAS	European External Action Service
EGT	European Group of Training
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EPLO	European Peacebuilding Liaison Office
EU	European Union
EUMC	European Union Military Committee
EUPOL	EU Police Mission
EUSEC	EU Advisory and Assistance Mission for Security Reform
EUSR	EU Special Representative

ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
GA	General Assembly
GAERC	General Affairs and External Relations Council
HoD	Head of Delegation
HoM	Head of Mission
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent
ICTJ	International Center for Transitional Justice
ILO/IPEC	International Labour Organization/ International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
KATU	Civil Society Conflict Prevention Network
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MONUC	UN Mission in the DRC
MS	Member States
NP	Nonviolent Peaceforce
PBC	UN Peacebuilding Commission
PMG	Politico-Military Working Group, Council of the EU
SAVE	Save the Children
SC	UN Security Council
SFCG	Search for Common Ground
SRSG	Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TJ	Transitional Justice
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	UN SC Resolution
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WV	World Vision

Welcome session

The introductory panel chaired by Ms Andreja Dolničar Jeraj, Centre for European Perspective, was intended to set the stage for the conference by analyzing and introducing the three basic themes for the event:

1. Enhancing the implementation of the *EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict* and the *Checklist for the Integration of the Protection of Children Affected by Armed Conflict into ESDP Operations* as well as other tools available to the EU for the protection and participation of children;
2. Ensuring more inter-pillar, inter-institutional and "all of EU" cooperation on CAAC (human rights, humanitarian aid, development, ESDP and crisis management, CFSP diplomacy);
3. Enhancing cooperation with NGOs across all EU instruments in the field of CAAC.

Matjaž Šinkovec, State Secretary, Slovenian Presidency

State Secretary Šinkovec stated that the situation of children, particularly those affected by armed conflict (CAAC), had been a priority of both the EU and Slovenia for several years. Similarly, the cooperation with NGOs and their role in this particular area has been highly valued as it is most often the NGOs that provide basic assistance such as food distribution, education and basic health care both during and after violence. As regards the current EU-NGO cooperation, Mr Šinkovec highlighted a growing consensus on the core values of their common engagement and on the mutual code of conduct that is introducing new ways to enhance partnership, looking for further synergies, complementarities and coherence of action. However, there still remain many shortcomings; therefore, the Slovenian Presidency decided to deal with the situation of CAAC as a horizontal priority. Mr Šinkovec affirmed that the existing EU framework of guidelines, checklists and regulations, as well as the extensive and clearly defined set of practices and accumulated important lessons from the past provided a sufficient basis. Now, it is time to improve the implementation by optimizing impact, updating the existing instruments, ensuring that they are implemented in a holistic and coherent manner, and making efforts more visible. As to the initiatives taken by the Slovenian Presidency, Mr Šinkovec mentioned the study entitled "Enhancing the EU Response to Children Affected by Armed Conflict with Particular Reference to Development Policy", which was commissioned by the Presidency; the preparation of Council Conclusions (to be adopted by GAERC in May) reflecting the recent Commission documents on CAAC; active promotion of the inclusion of child-sensitive measures in the ESDP; as well as continued support for European and international (UN, ICC) initiatives and the endorsement of instruments such as the Paris Commitments to protect children from unlawful recruitment or use by armed forces or armed groups.

Mihela Zupančič,
Head of the Commission Representation
in Slovenia

Ms Zupančič gave an overview of the Commission's engagement in the area of CAAC. She stated that the Commission was working actively both at the policy level and through its different instruments to fight against the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups, as well as to enhance the situation of children indirectly affected by armed conflict. To tackle these issues, the Commission argues for a multi-faceted approach addressing all aspects – including development, humanitarian, security and human rights policies. Ms Zupančič added that the fight against impunity, also through International Criminal Law, was an integral part of such a strategy. Ms Zupančič referred to the most recent Commission Communication on the issue titled "A Special Place for Children in EU External Action", which was adopted on 5 February 2008. Both staff working documents attached to the new Communication prioritize the issue of CAAC. The Action Plan on children's rights in EU External Action, in complementarity with the EU Human Rights Guidelines, recognises the critical opportunity for the EU to ensure cooperation with global and regional inter-governmental partners with responsibilities for children, as well as with civil society organisations, academia, national institutions for human rights and children's ombudspersons and child protection networks. Finally, Ms Zupančič made a reference to relevant financial tools of the Commission in this area, namely the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and the thematic programme "Investing in People" in the Development Cooperation Instrument, both of which support projects implemented by third parties, primarily NGOs.

Anne Palm,
KATU/EPLO

Ms Palm, speaking also on behalf of EPLO, explained that enhanced cooperation between the EU and civil society would improve coherence and effectiveness of EU action throughout the conflict cycle, and this was also the reason for EPLO's involvement in this conference. She gave an overview of what has become known as the "RoCS" process, or the *Role of Civil Society in Crisis Management*, a fruitful collaboration between EPLO and EU Presidencies, of which this conference was the latest outcome. Throughout this cooperation, *"Recommendations for Enhancing Co-operation with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the Framework of EU Civilian Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention"* were adopted by CIVCOM in 2006. The Recommendations emphasise the importance of consulting with NGOs, particularly to ensure successful implementation of planned EU activities on the ground, foremost among which are ESDP missions. Discussing a revision of the Recommendations under the Slovenian Presidency was mentioned by Ms Palm as one of the expectations of this conference. Ms Palm reflected on the impressive progress of the RoCS consultation processes, explaining the fact that NGOs and EU institutions were currently discussing a thematic issue, namely CAAC, which was a new and welcome development. Moving away from a strict focus on security and peacebuilding, the conference was a further step towards full coherence between EU institutions as well as EU-NGO cooperation.

Regional Perspective – Lessons Learned from South-Eastern Europe

Jovan Divjak, "Education Builds Bosnia-Herzegovina", BiH

In his opening address, Mr Divjak spoke about children and young people affected by the 1992-1995 war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He stated that young people and children were the greatest victims of armed conflicts. In Bosnia, more than 15,000 children were killed during the war. Around 20,000 of them lost one or both parents, and 15,000 families have not yet found their missing parents, brothers and sisters. Today, 13 years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, the situation of human rights is at an unacceptably low level owing to various factors typical of countries emerging from wars as well as transition countries. Pervasive poverty, unemployment, social insecurity, corruption, and a higher crime rate also contribute to the difficult situation of children in Bosnia.

Mr Divjak described how the rights of the child were threatened in Bosnia-Herzegovina today. Violence against children and abuse and exploitation of children result from both the current situation in the society and the consequences of the war. Violence in the community, manifested through different forms of exploitation of children, is a current feature of Western Balkan countries. Children are exposed to all forms of physical and psychological violence, exploitation, sexual abuse and other forms of violence and abuse. The fastest-growing problems are trafficking in children, child pornography and child prostitution.

In Mr Divjak's words, a child needs a non-violent environment to develop his or her capacities to the fullest. Article 19 of the CRC obliges States Parties to work towards systemic protection of children from abuse and neglect. Given Bosnia-Herzegovina's complex organization at the local, cantonal, entity and state levels, this is not an easy task. As a result, discrepancies between legislation and practice have become a reality in the Bosnian society. Mr Divjak explained the particular challenges faced by the Bosnian education system, which is organized independently in ten cantons, two entities, and the Brčko District. A lack of specialized education programmes and systematic educational work with students is only one of the obstacles to ensuring children's safety during their stay at school and to creating the feeling of belonging to their peer group.

Children and young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had a single education system before the war, are educated today on three different tracks, depending on their region and ethnicity. Segregation, discrimination and assimilation are deeply rooted in many schools, especially regarding the subjects of national history, geography, language and religion. Fifty-three schools in BiH operate as "two schools under one roof", under two separate syllabuses, with the explanation that they are exercising their right to their culture and language.

As a fundamental precondition for further development and advancement of human rights and the rights of the child in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mr Divjak recommended that Bosnia-Herzegovina be defined as "the state of its citizens" in the sense that a single education system should be established there, the influence of politics and religion on education eliminated, schools should be ethnically neutral environments within the education system; human rights and the rights of the child, as well as the prevention of violence should be promoted as an independent element of instruction, from pre-school classes to universities and – last but not least – NGOs should act as watch-dogs in implementing and monitoring human rights.

1st Plenary Session – "Implementation – Coherence – Cooperation"

The first plenary session was facilitated by Peter Grk, Slovenian Chair of CIVCOM. In his introductory address, Mr Grk stated the intention of the Slovenian Presidency to bring forward the process of EU-NGO cooperation in the field of crisis management developed over successive Presidencies, and simultaneously focus on the issue of CAAC, which features prominently as a priority of the Slovenian Presidency.

Hadewych Hazelzet, ESDP Department, German Foreign Office

Ms Hazelzet focused on the implementation of the EU CAAC Guidelines in the area of the ESDP and on the progress made in the last five years following the adoption of the Guidelines in 2003, which coincided with the deployment of the first ESDP mission – operation ARTEMIS. Since then, the EU has come a long way. Now, one no longer needs to justify consulting (CAAC) experts in the area of security and defence. Today, core notions are incorporated into all important policy guidelines and planning and operational documents, as well as into the mandates of EU representatives. In addition, all ESDP missions now have a human rights and/or gender advisor. Ms Hazelzet emphasised that all these developments were fruits of a collective effort of engaged EU actors.

However, the "bad news" was that the policy framework remained a "paper exercise." This was due to the institutional setup of the EU – hopefully improved through the new EU Reform Treaty – as well as the challenges of mainstreaming. Furthermore, the "implementation gap" needs to be bridged as well. In this respect, the progress of ESDP operations is visible, e.g. regarding the gender issue: from lessons learned on the DRC, where the first gender advisor to ESDP missions has been appointed, it became clear that the contribution of this advisor was enormous, as she acted as a bridge between the mission staff and the local civil society. Ms Hazelzet also mentioned that almost all countries where ESDP missions were deployed had ratified the CRC. The EU Member States and the Council Secretariat now integrate these international obligations into mission planning documents.

On concrete steps to be taken now, Ms Hazelzet confirmed that the best ideas had already been laid out in the Checklist and the Implementation Guidelines on CAAC. However, the mission experts (gender, human rights, and now also CAAC) need support from Brussels, i.e. someone at the HQ level available to offer guidance. This is pertinent to the new structure of the Council Secretariat, in particular the CPCC. In addition, there should be an NGO counterpart for the missions on the ground and in Brussels. A pocket chart for ESDP personnel, e.g. on children, should be developed. Regarding training, Ms Hazelzet said that even though some planning documents for ESDP mission clearly demanded that the mission personnel received training, this remained to be decided by the relevant Member States. Ms Hazelzet said that ideally, NGOs and UNICEF should play a greater role in providing training on children's rights. She stated that so far, developing the lessons learned had been an internal process. The Council, however, is setting up a Lessons Learned Capacity Unit, which could bring in lessons learned from a similar unit set up within, for instance, DPKO.

**Davide Zaru,
HR and Democratization Unit,
DG RELEX, European Commission**

Mr Zaru focused on EU external human rights policy from the Commission's perspective, looking at the synergies and connections between EU instruments and mechanisms, and discussed the ways to improve them. He also addressed the question of how to strengthen a coordinated response, including better implementation of the Guidelines and the Checklist. In this regard, the Commission is active both in a policy perspective and through its financial instruments. The Guidelines provide commitments by the EU to instruct ESDP operations and Heads of Mission (HoMs) in third countries to monitor the situation of CAAC. Similarly, the Commission has instructed the Heads of Delegation (HoDs) in 19 priority countries to closely monitor the situation of CAAC. Through this initiative, it is also evident that the Commission aims at a more constructive dialogue with CSOs and child protection networks present on the ground. As regards the issue of more proactive lobbying, HoDs are instructed to follow up political demarches vis-à-vis third countries. Further aims of the Commission include a systematic approach to human rights situations in political and policy dialogues, advocacy on crimes against children and the fight against impunity. Two HoDs of the priority countries confirmed that CAAC issues were being incorporated into Commission's policies on the ground and closely monitored. In addition, dialogues and coordination are undertaken with main child protection partners on the ground. The Commission supports projects implemented by third parties and funded mainly through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), with a new call for proposals to be launched between October and November 2008. The success of another call for proposals under the thematic programme titled "Investing in People" could be measured by the fact that more than 300 projects applied for funding. In the recently adopted paper "A Special Place for Children in EU External Action", delegations were asked to nominate a human rights focal point.

**Martin Nagler,
Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers**

Mr Nagler concentrated on the aspect of cooperation with NGOs, noting that experience in EU-NGO cooperation on the issue of CAAC worked well at the Brussels level, where NGOs had been taken into account in the drafting processes of the Guidelines, the Implementation Strategy and the Checklist. However, the situation in the field is rather different. Cooperation between NGOs and EU representatives, i.e. Commission Delegation and Member State representations, was often insufficient. Nevertheless, the expansion of the priority list to include another six countries, which was adopted by COHOM in December 2007, was a success. However, cooperation at the field level must be enhanced. Embassies and Commission Delegations must be instructed to seek dialogue with NGOs on the ground, not only in terms of monitoring and reporting, but also in terms of protecting Human Rights Defenders engaged in the field of CAAC, many of whom are women.

As to coherence, Mr Nagler said that the problem of fragmentation needed to be addressed urgently. The Presidency has made considerable efforts over the last months to emphasize that CAAC needs to be discussed in the spheres of human rights, development and security. The Council Conclusions to be adopted in May are the first positive opportunity to prove that this cooperation is working well. Future Presidencies should follow this example and make sure that a comprehensive approach is put into practice at all levels. A detailed plan as to how this may be done needs to be developed. Even though coherence between the Council and the Commission has improved, there is still much to be done, particularly with regard to mainstreaming CAAC in all Country Strategy Papers.

On implementation, Mr Nagler reiterated that the existing policy framework was good, but the implementation was missing. This is partly due to the fact that EU documents in general elaborate on *what* needs to be done, but very little on *how* to get there and *how* the different EU entities *plan* to get there. On the issue of resources, Mr Nagler said that they were crucial if the EU claimed that the promotion of children's rights was one of its priorities. For instance, a Special Representative on CAAC would be very welcome; this was a suggestion during the drafting of the Implementation Strategy. The Commission should increase the funding of CAAC activities. A unique opportunity to improve EU-NGO but also inter-EU cooperation in the area of CAAC is the Lisbon Treaty. Experts on children's rights should be incorporated into the EEAS.

Sylvie Fouet, UNICEF Brussels

Ms Fouet, representing UNICEF and the UN Policy Group in Brussels, provided an external dimension to the EU-NGO discussions on CAAC. By taking stock and assessing the situation of children in the field, Ms Fouet mentioned that based on (UN SC Res.) 1612 monitoring and reporting mechanism, 13 countries would be on the agenda of the SC CAAC Working Group, and all but Sudan and Burma/Myanmar agreed to be discussed in this exceptional forum. A manual on lessons learned and best practices on the monitoring and reporting mechanism under Resolution 1612 will be published shortly. As regards the question of how to move beyond reporting, e.g. discuss targeted measures and sanctions, all actors must join forces. UNICEF is presently pushing for a new resolution on 1612, where the list of six core violations will be extended to include sexual violence at the very least.

New outcomes of the Machel 10 Year Review looking at the impact of conflict on children over the last ten years will be published in July 2008. Ms Fouet explained that this review took into account the changing nature of warfare, incorporating elements such as terrorism, counter-terrorism, detention of children in Afghanistan and Iraq, the formation of gangs and cross-border movements, attack on schools, etc. The re-integration of children into their societies is crucial in these new contexts, as well as the issues of long-term and coherent planning in different sectors. Fighting impunity is not an easy topic, but it must be tackled. Opportunities for the participation of children are expanding, and now it needs to be discussed how they can participate in decision-making processes in post-conflict situations. Finally, Ms Fouet listed a couple of proposals on the ways of improving the cooperation on CAAC in the future, and made a reference to the conclusions reached in the ECDPM study on CAAC commissioned by the Presidency: The Commission must address the commitment-implementation gap (on aid programming, allocation of capacities, capacity building); to promote the community-based approach, dialogue with communities needs to be enhanced; to develop prevention tools and early warning mechanisms in particular; to make use of the conflict-sensitive approach; to analyze the causes of recruitment of children, situation of families and communities and ensure that a protection system is in place, e.g. by selecting pilot countries to analyze progress.

Dialogue, Q&A

Discussions following the first plenary session were very lively and engaged. NGO representatives reported on several challenges and difficulties they encountered in their daily work. For instance, a Colombian representative highlighted the problems of learning and understanding EU activities when working on the ground. Although many local NGOs know about the Guidelines, they do not know how to use them, and they also have little knowledge of how the EU works. In this regard, better communication at the local level is necessary. Delegation staff working on CAAC must be aware of international developments, particularly regarding Res. 1612. A Palestinian NGO representative reported that a Working Group on 1612 has been established in his country and five reports were presented to the SRSG's office. However, he was disillusioned, because his organization was becoming increasingly involved in reporting without getting the impression that it had any impact. As regards the implementation, the dilemma posed to the training efforts was mentioned: after completing trainings and leaving the field for one year, the impact often remains zero. This could be avoided only by obtaining more specific knowledge of country contexts. The fact that general guidelines exist is important, but their accurate implementation may be guaranteed only if specific country contexts are respected. Another challenge was the EU's cooperation with controversial governments such as the newly elected Nepalese one. It was noted that the EU may need to rethink its approach to non-state armed groups, as evidence shows that the majority of children are recruited by such actors. In terms of a follow up, the Slovenian Presidency was asked to ensure that all its activities concerning CAAC are taken up by the incoming French Presidency. A follow-up to EU actions in countries such as Colombia needs to happen and an evaluation of funded projects should help identify successes and difficulties in the CAAC area. In response to the issue of how to make sure that CAAC is a continuous priority for EU Presidencies, a Member State official responded that the Lisbon Treaty was expected to harmonize Presidency priorities. A Brussels-based NGO representative stated that a step towards action could have been taken only if the nexus between security, development and human rights was considered. Efforts to review the European Security Strategy should take into account this connection. This requires a strong conceptual framework, which would also help fulfil the hopes for a new EU Treaty in terms of cooperation. However, the crucial question of who should coordinate actions either in general or in certain cases needs to be answered.

A lack of resources, in particular human ones in the sense that everyone is overworked was mentioned as a pertinent problem. It was suggested that work with the UN, which is currently being done with COHOM, should rather be carried out by another, new working group. Human rights experts could be introduced to all Permanent Representations that meet regularly. In addition, the EU burdensharing capacity could be improved within COHOM and perhaps also in other bodies. Working across bodies (security, human rights, development) and following up on all activities is crucial to make an impact on the ground, a fact that also came out in the ECDPM study on CAAC. Furthermore, the EEAS was labelled as a "golden opportunity" for the EU to "seriously restructure itself". In response to several questions, Ms Hazelzet mentioned that the EEAS was indeed a good opportunity and that this was the moment to influence decision-making both within the Member States and in Brussels, particularly with regard to how expertise (on CAAC) could be included. Mr Zaru agreed that more in terms of awareness raising, skills and capacity building in Commission services, including, Delegations, could to be done. He said that this year, trainings with Save the Children and UNICEF had been organized for Commission staff, including from Delegations. Regarding coherence, he mentioned the Commission Communication "A Special Place for Children in EU External Action", a joint effort by all DGs that also deal with CAAC. The attached action plan also provided specific language on how to mainstream children's rights into the Country Strategy Papers and National Indicative Programmes. Ms Fouet replied the questions on coordination and who should coordinate what by stating that the UN had shown great leadership, not only with regard to 1612, but also in nominating resident coordinators in third countries. Ms Fouet alluded to the UN cluster approach, in which UNICEF is coordinating the child sector on the ground. As regards 1612, Ms Fouet emphasized the importance to get feedback from the field, mentioning Colombia as a success story. On the limitations of 1612, Ms Fouet explained that only 12 countries were being discussed at the CAAC Working Group of the UN SC, which means that ten country reports will be dealt with in 2008.

WG A – Prevention of Grave Violations of Children’s Rights in Armed Conflicts or Activities Targeting Children Directly Involved in Hostilities

The working group chaired by Jane Backhurst, World Vision, based its discussion on the fact that prevention was a core component of child protection before, during and after a conflict, a duty and a challenging task for the future. A central question, however, was whether all actors have a common understanding about what this means and what is experienced in collaboration between the EU and NGO – both based in Brussels/Europe and in the field. The inputs framed a set of questions:

1. Which parts of EU policies can be used to provide an enabling environment?
2. Which existing EU structures and mechanisms can be used to provide an enabling?
3. Environment to prevent violations of children’ rights?
4. Which EU actors already try to address prevention?
5. What are some good examples of preventing violations of children’s rights?
6. What are some of the key barriers in preventing violations of children’s rights?
7. (Inadequate will to implement policies? Planning? Expertise?)
8. Which EU actors need to coordinate better during conflict and what concrete action
9. Could be undertaken for this to happen in the short and medium term?
10. How can NGOs support the EU’s work on prevention?

Ambassador Matjaž Kovačič, Head of the Division for International Organizations and Human Security, Slovenian Presidency

Ambassador Kovačič explored the concept of human security, stating that the concepts of human security and prevention were closely interlinked; however, some countries in the UN and even in Europe would have different views on this. He asked how children’s rights might be included in common policies and how the cooperation and coordination between civil society and governments might be improved in this regard. He explained how the Portuguese Presidency saw the need to bring CAAC on the agenda. They also launched a debate on structural challenges to enhance the EU’s efforts for improving cooperation with the UN. Representing a smaller country in the EU, Ambassador Kovačič introduced his views on the decisions of the Human Security Network, which he chaired in 2007. At the beginning of the 1990s, Slovenia faced the need to improve cooperation with NGOs, as thousands of refugees were coming from the neighbouring countries as a result of the instability in the region. In post-conflict situations, the needs of women and children are often the most acute, and in this time of need, the Slovenian government had the political will to fund programmes to address this issue. Ambassador Kovačič stated that holistic approaches were necessary in order to provide shelter, reintegrate refugees and prevent violence. The diplomacy and EU institutions, e.g. COHOM, will play an important role in creating a common policy on human rights, in particular children’s rights. Moreover, the Ambassador added that the UN Security Council should react in cases of gross human rights violations.

Sophie de Coninck, ILO/IPEC, DRC

Ms de Coninck explained that from a development perspective, successful recruitment of children by armed forces might have many explanations. One of the most important ones is that children believe that they will improve their lives by joining armed forces, as they imagine getting a real chance at survival. Poverty is the main factor in child recruitment, making particularly children of poor families more vulnerable. Ms De Coninck stressed the need for context-specific programming based on comprehensive analysis, cooperation among all actors involved, and the need for specific principles when addressing prevention and reintegration through economic measures. Furthermore, the international community must bear in mind that access to sustainable livelihoods should be both individually-focused and community-based. Different parts of the country will be affected in different ways, and traditional mechanism for reintegration or healing should not be forgotten. Through all of this, it is important to implement female-specific and gender-sensitive actions. She continued by saying that prevention had to start in every situation. Here, economic aspects are particularly important and the ILO gives general recommendations to address the challenges of overcoming the economic gap. The EU should take the lead in complying with international resolutions, protocols, and documents to eliminate child labour in its worst forms.

**Sylvain Vité,
Legal Division, ICRC Geneva**

In UN Security Council Resolution 1612, the UN expressed its resolve to devote particular attention to children's rights and the need for more protection and prevention. Mr Vité opened his speech by introducing a variety of documents and protocols of international and humanitarian law protecting children with special rules. In his view, the age limit for soldiers should be universally fixed at 18 years, a demand which is difficult to realise, as it would require a comprehensive strategy and approach. The use of children by armed forces does not have a sufficient legal basis; there is also no common sense for necessary sanctions. With regard to the EU, he discussed the need to implement the UNSCR 1612 procedure.

The existing checklist for the integration of the protection of children affected by armed conflict into ESDP operations will be reviewed soon. Meanwhile, it is obvious that, apart from the consensus of May 2006 and December 2007, many more issues must be tackled. The nexus of security, development, and human rights is broader than expected in post-conflict situations of recent years. Mr Vité welcomed the EU's commitment to take on a leading role in the promotion and protection of human rights and the special protection of children's rights.

Discussions, Q & A

A lively discussion focused on several topics, such as dialogue, knowledge and expertise, coherence, planning, and finance. Bearing in mind the need for labour division, local knowledge, and long-term funding – for instance for reintegration – the group briefly touched on the call for greater inter-pillar coherence and called for integrated approaches with a more country-specific focus. Here, the mid-term review of the Country Strategy Papers could provide an opportunity to ensure CAAC as a long term priority. Some experts from the field requested more inclusion of children in planning, because they should not be regarded only as victims. It was understood as being common sense that the engagement of local society is essential and that communities are crucial to the implementation. Therefore, capacity building and education are the key to enabling and convincing non-armed groups and former combatants to respect international norms and humanitarian law. Dialogue among all actors is both important and sensitive, as it goes directly to the question of who defines which actors are involved. Finally, all participants agreed that it is very important for the EU to provide core documents in several local languages to make them accessible for civil society organizations working on the ground. This is to prevent local CSOs and communities from being excluded from discussion and information sharing.

**Recommendations presented by
Rapporteur Anje Jooye-Kruiter
to the plenary**

**Regarding "Knowledge and Expertise",
the following measures were suggested:**

- Integrate the term 'protection' in broader programmes;
- Economically support families in order to prevent recruitment of children by armed groups and enhance successful re-integration;
- Encourage the division of labour (e.g. economic support) by the state;
- Engage in long-term programming and financing;
- Improve cooperation and coordination between the EU and NGOs at the field level;
- Increase flexibility in EU funding to ensure easier/timely access for NGOs working at field level;
- Support restoration/use of education systems for counselling and reintegration activities;
- Use integrated approaches (on protection, economic support, etc.) with country-specific strategies and conduct context and needs assessments during the planning phase and before the implementation;
- Enhance meaningful involvement of civil society/ activities should be led by local initiatives;
- Move away from urban focus on child participation and involve children in rural areas;
- Ensure a gender perspective in programming and implementation;
- Make use of the mid-term review of the CSPs to ensure CAAC as a long term priority;
- Use Child Protection Networks to coordinate work of CSOs/between CSOs and the EU;
- Bear in mind that children are not only victims, but they can/should participate in planning;
- Create an EU Humanitarian Forum within the first 48 hours of humanitarian crises, bringing together key decision-makers for humanitarian, peacemaking, civilian, and diplomatic responses to the crises on the basis of context analysis and using normative frameworks of IHL and CRC; the Forum should include decision-makers from Presidencies, PSC, CIVCOM, COHOM, geographical groups, DG DEV, AIDCO, DG RELEX, ECHO; it should ensure that each structure commits to specific action according to their responsibilities and mandate; it should be complementary to the on-the-ground coordination.

**Regarding "Coherence, planning and
finance", the following measures were
suggested:**

- Recognize appropriate expertise with regard to the division of labour;
- Better understand local contexts (situation, issues of democracy and freedom, etc.);
- Include civil society in forming action plans;
- Strengthen local society, as CSOs and communities are crucial to the implementation;
- Raise local awareness on opportunities in international law, conventions, resolutions with relevance to children;
- Commit to actively engage with non-state armed groups to compel them to respect international norms and international humanitarian law;
- Define benchmarks and structured reporting and lessons learned on CAAC issues.

**Regarding "Dialogue", the following
measures were suggested:**

- Translate EU/Commission documents into local languages to make them accessible;
- Have EU/Commission officials engage in dialogue with local CSOs to understand local situation, issues of democracy and freedom, etc.

**Recommendations on further crucial issues
were:**

- Use the ICC's "threat" in some countries to prevent child rights violations;
- Improve the protection of human rights defenders;
- Use the upcoming discussion on the European Security Strategy as an opportunity to include CAAC perspective;
- The EU should take on a leading role in enforcing support for CAAC in/from third countries.

WG B – Participation of Children – Activities Targeting Children Indirectly Affected by Armed Conflict

This working group chaired by Bernardo Monzani, Search for Common Ground, focused on the need in many conflict and post-conflict situations to engage and empower children so that they can contribute directly to policies and decision-making processes affecting them, as well as exercise their fundamental right to express opinions freely and be heard (Art. 12 CRC). EU institutions have recently focused on improving the participation of children in programming activities, including the mainstreaming of children's voices and views, and many NGOs have acquired valuable expertise in this field.

Dubravka Šekoranja, MFA, Slovenian Presidency

Ms Šekoranja gave an overview of the Slovenian engagement in the area of CAAC, inserting these activities into the Trio Presidency Programme. The Presidency's main goal is to achieve progress on the ground. Ms Šekoranja mentioned the ECDPM study commissioned by the Slovenian Presidency, which refers to the empowerment of children, particularly with regard to including them as active peacemakers for improving the future of their own societies. A similar view is expressed by recent Commission papers, and it is also reflected in international discussions taking place at this very moment. Ms Šekoranja mentioned a programme supported by the Netherlands in Liberia, carried out by SFCG, by using radio as a tool for re-integration. Two former child combatants from hostile combating groups hosted the show. By reporting on national peace developments, they showed to their public that reconciliation was possible. Ms Šekoranja confirmed that such processes were crucial and would be further supported by the EU.

Jasminka Tadić Husanović, Prijateljice, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Ms Tadić Husanović presented her organization, an NGO operating in Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, on psycho-social support for traumatized women and children. *Prijateljice*, which means "girlfriends" in Bosnian, originates from a German project that aimed at providing food and emergency services to women and children in areas affected by war in Bosnia. Soon after the war, it became necessary to focus on the growing needs of the project beneficiaries. Psycho-social support was urgently needed, as many families experienced displacement, losses from war, disappearances, etc. In parallel to the psycho-social support, *Prijateljice* began organizing activities involving children with a clear aim to help "complete" families again and to help individuals (re)integrate into their – often new – local communities. For *Prijateljice*, regional networking with partners in Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro was essential.

In this regard, focusing on witnesses of war crimes, a particularly pressing issue for the Balkan countries, was enhanced by *Prijateljice*. By way of conclusion, Ms Tadić Husanović asked a few questions: What concrete protection initiatives besides the needs assessment could be taken up in Bosnia? Networking "in time" – in regard to European Funds, how can they be efficiently absorbed? Can Commission funding application procedures for local NGOs be simplified? What can be done to solve the problem of having low-capacity organisations facing the challenges of very technical reporting and evaluation?

Rashmi Tapa, Search for Common Ground, Nepal

Ms Tapa, who coordinates the child protection section in the SFCG office in Nepal, focused on main challenges and lessons learned in terms of child participation. After describing the activities of SFCG in Nepal, Ms Tapa explained the main challenges of her organization's work in Nepal, namely the Maoist refusal to admit that they use and recruit children as soldiers; re-recruitment of children into newly emerging groups such as the Youth League of the Maoists; and thirdly, the general need to adapt to changing political contexts, such as the newest accession to power by the Maoists. Lessons learned from their activities of child inclusion in radio programmes were, in Ms Tapa's words that one needs to work with adults first. Secondly, in order to make an impact, clear practical procedures need to be followed. Ms Tapa raised some questions at the end of her presentation: How can local and international NGOs work with the (problematic) government in power? How can children be best included here? How can children be involved in monitoring and impact-assessment of (SFCG) programmes? Where can child participation at the policy-making level happen? Where? How can children advocate for themselves?

Jennifer Moorehead, Save the Children, Palestine

Ms Moorehead described her work in Palestine with regard to child participation, in particular of children indirectly affected by the armed conflict. This category is quite broad, as it encompasses all children under 18 that live in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza. Ms Moorehead mentioned several challenges her organization faces when it comes to the needs of their primary duty-bearers: Israeli policies and the continued occupation represent the most significant violation of children's rights; furthermore, Israel does not accept its responsibilities under the CRC in the occupied territories (OPT). In areas where the Palestinian Authority (PA) has administrative control, violations of children's rights persist; even though the PA has promised to deal with these violations; it lacks the resources and the political possibility to make efficient policies, as there are severe limits to its functioning. The third "provider" of services to children is the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). It also has significant responsibilities because its duties include providing care for the refugee population in the OPTs, but it has been unable to fulfil all pressing needs in recent times. Ms Moorehead stated that the reason why child rights were not respected was that they did not have a voice in decision-making and that adults did not know how to listen to children. Based on their work in OPT, SAVE is looking at developing sustainable models for participation, despite the unstable local and national contexts, in conflict or in transition. The goal of Safe's participation work is to empower children to influence those in a position to impact their future well-being. Here, the aim is to give children the opportunity to access decision-makers. Ms Moorehead made some recommendations to EU institutions: (1) To support initiatives that mainstream child participation with a view to achieving sustainability that is realistic; in her case, this refers to focusing on areas beyond the control of the PA in order to reach the most marginalized children. Therefore, Safe recommends that the EU directly supports activities that are not yet supported by bilateral funding; (2) EU Country Teams should participate in relevant Child Protection Networks in order to better understand key child rights concerns; they must also be aware of local and national 1612 activities; (3) The Delegation should map organizations involved in child participation and the countries in which they are working and strengthen their cooperation; here, Safe and other specialized organizations can be of crucial help; (4) Delegations and policy teams should receive training in child protection to be able to engage with children in a meaningful way and make appropriate use of available structures.

Discussions, Q & A

The discussion reflected both concerns with regard to developments in country-specific contexts such as Bosnia, Africa, Palestine and Nepal, as well as challenges to the EU in terms of programming and funding projects. Concerning the country context, media attention to children and difficult work environments, but also the issue of a lack of qualified NGO staff were mentioned. The working group discussed the general problem of NGOs operating in states where they do not get any kind of support and thus model their activities according to donor requirements. Moreover, the "abuse" of children in the sense that they feature in an NGO's programme but are not actually included in the NGO structure and work is problematic as well. Furthermore, the problem of including children living in remote and rural areas remains challenging everywhere, including the fact that it was often dangerous for children to participate in NGO activities in conflict areas. In terms of programming, the challenge of how to ensure conflict-sensitive approaches in the area of child protection was mentioned. The biggest challenge here was to convince parents and communities that children can participate in peacebuilding projects. Recommendations of the working group were directed towards the EU (programming and funding), but also towards NGOs working in child protection and participation, which must better consider what has been passed in terms of good legislation at the national level and implement it in their own organizations. In addition, NGOs should develop a common strategy to which they can hold themselves accountable. In this way, duplication of work might be avoided.

**Recommendations presented by
Rapporteur Davide Zaru
to the plenary**

**The following general recommendations
were made to improve child participation:**

- The EU should include in its reporting issues related to the root causes of inadequate promotion of child participation by governments, with particular reference to the lack of legislation, its inadequate implementation or a lack of political will;
- EU Presidencies, Missions and Delegations should liaise in more practical terms with NGOs in order to ensure that reports and HR fact sheets cover the participation dimension;
- Acknowledge that child participation should be safe and meaningful, referring to the link between child protection and child participation, thus also including children in discussing the aims of various projects carried out in the field;
- Acknowledge that child participation is a process that should engage both children and parents (adults in general), as well as all other caretakers;

**As regards the EU policy level, the following
measures were suggested:**

- Use the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 as a framework for enhancing CAAC and ensuring the ongoing development of an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child. Both could improve the programmatic enhancement of child participation;
- Consider to have the forthcoming European Forum on the Rights of the Child in November specifically focus on the issue of child participation;

**Recommendations with regard to project
funding were:**

- To better improve the response to the need of children in rural areas and to include a focus on child participation as well as its sustainability;
- To consider having more flexible funding for specialized NGOs on the ground and to have Local Presidencies assist in funding matters;
- To consider how better guaranteeing sustainable and long-term funding;
- To improve language in order to rule out "discrimination against child participation", in relation to ethnic minorities, religions, gender, etc.;
- Better consider the specificities of country situations; here, it is necessary to engage with NGOs in serious assessment of the situations. In this regard, local international actors need to improve their networking activities in order to fill this gap.

This working group, chaired and facilitated by Dick Oosting, International Center for Transitional Justice, looked at the question of how to ensure meaningful and age-appropriate participation of children in justice and reconciliation efforts as a critical component of building sustainable peace. Participants discussed specific opportunities and challenges of child participation in different transitional justice (TJ) mechanisms such as truth commissions and trials. The working group first considered conceptual issues and then moved on to discuss more practical matters.

**Anne Grandjean,
Justice for Children Section,
UNICEF (HQ NY)**

Ms Grandjean specifically focused on justice for children. She drew the audience's attention to the fact that children were increasingly affected and targeted by warfare. In this context, functioning justice mechanisms are needed more than ever but are unfortunately often lacking. Ms Grandjean mentioned four necessary actions of post-conflict justice: (1) Strengthening national, formal justice system as soon as possible during/after crisis; (2) Promoting informal justice systems in line with child rights; (3) Ensuring access to justice for all (including children); (4) Interventions specific to crisis/post-crisis, including transitional justice. In her view, a functioning justice system was a pre-requisite for the fulfilment of children's rights necessary to maintain the rule of law and security, an important component in poverty reduction strategies as well as a preventive strategy, as the end of impunity helps prevent further violations. Ms Grandjean explained that it was of paramount importance to strengthen existing justice systems, be they national, international or even informal, but also to simultaneously integrate international standards and norms pertaining to children as victims, witnesses and alleged offenders. An additional complicating factor in efficiently providing justice in post-conflict contexts was the question of refugees: overlapping systems and a lack of familiarity with the host country's legal system require targeted, tailored legal awareness-raising.

Interventions specific to crisis/post-crisis settings should, in Ms Grandjean's view, ensure that children's voices are heard and taken into account in peace agreements as well as all other issues relevant to their security; promote the post-crisis situation as an opportunity to establish a juvenile justice system ("build back better"); integrate children's concerns in security and justice discussions and initiatives, including peacekeeping missions; develop the capacity of legal services, civil society and paralegals on legal issues of particular relevance to children in both crisis and post-crisis situations. Ms Grandjean explained that the UN's approach to justice for children was aimed at focusing greater attention on children in the areas of the rule of law and security sector reform. She announced that a Secretary-General's guidance note on a UN-wide approach was presently in preparation, and that the next step would be the publication of an inter-agency operational guide.

**Ana Patel,
ICTJ (NY)**

Ms Patel highlighted the link between transitional justice (TJ) and children, as well as the importance of child participation in TJ mechanisms and for having children's voices heard. She stated that in the perception of the ICTJ, TJ looked at the ways in which societies attempt to deal with histories of massive human rights violations. This view implies that without addressing past violations, it will be difficult to move on and build sustainable peace. Ms Patel justified the importance of considering the special needs of children through a TJ lens, mainly due to the fact that, even though children are often the primary victims of violence and armed conflict, they also become the perpetrators, e.g. as child soldiers. Therefore, the question of child perpetrators needs to be addressed, including the question of how to re-integrate them into society. Despite all this, Ms Patel said that so far, children mostly remain voiceless in processes established in transitional contexts. The TJ agenda is about creating opportunities for voices and visibility. The question is how children as right holders and rights claimants can participate more effectively in various TJ mechanisms (e.g. prosecutions, reparations, institutional reform and truth seeking process), obviously considering local justice and reconciliation processes. Child-sensitive approaches in different proceedings must be developed and implemented, psycho-social assistance, follow-up monitoring and medical care, addressing the issues of housing and educational support – all these must go hand in hand with child-sensitive participation. The particular vulnerability of children requires TJ experts to work hand in hand with child protection experts in order to ensure that children are not further marginalized or victimized by these processes. Ms Patel also mentioned important cross-cutting issues, such as gender dynamics (different impacts of conflicts on girls and young women), the question of victims vs. perpetrator dichotomy, and the representation of children's interests in peace negotiations. She also raised the question of how child soldiers should be handled in DDR processes. Ms Patel concluded that child participation should be supported in TJ mechanisms and future victimization should be prevented by creating a culture that protects children's rights. TJ mechanisms should be sensitive to the protection of the needs of children; however, some form of accountability for child perpetrators has to be ensured.

**Inger Buxton,
Crisis Management Unit, DG RELEX,
European Commission**

Ms Buxton focused on SSR and DDR issues as indirect efforts relating to the issue of CAAC. Her general message communicated the importance of the opportunity to address child rights issues and approaches in the processes of SSR and DDR, an aim the Commission is already putting into practice in its DDR and SSR programmes. Ms Buxton pointed out some pertinent issues and challenges at the EU level with regard to CAAC, including that of implementing an integrated approach by bringing together development and security actors. For a broader approach to security, it is important to put the individual at the centre (essentially, the human security concept). Ensuring a child rights perspective in all SSR work requires more effort at both policy and operational levels. There is also a need to create more specific manuals and guidelines on SSR. Specifically regarding SSR, the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach linking to questions of border policing and justice sector reform was highlighted. SSR reforms must prevent future violations by professionalizing the armed forces, bringing in a child-rights approach and offering training on children's rights in, e.g., police training. Community-based policing will need to consider the role of children, and it is important to work with civil society and youth groups to re-establish trust. Similarly, it is important to adopt a more up-stream approach to SSR by providing for more civilian control, also by using a child rights perspective. As regards DDR, Ms Buxton explained that the EU had a more developed approach, partly because issues were clearer, especially how to deal with former child combatants. However, more should be done with regard to mainstreaming in this area, e.g. to improve the consideration of family aspects in the context of DDR programmes. Overall, the DDR-SSR nexus needs to better integrate TJ, for example, by analyzing crimes committed in the past before SSR processes carry out a census.

**Amady Ba,
Cooperation Section of the Jurisdiction,
Office of the Prosecutor, ICC**

Judge Ba opened his intervention by reminding the participants that conscripting and enlisting children was a war crime under the Statute of the ICC. He gave an overview of the situation by referring to the currently investigated case of Lubanga, where a specific focus on child recruitment is being taken for the first time. This has sent out important signals, as it is now clear that the recruitment of child soldiers will be prosecuted. The "Lubanga-effect" may be used around the world. With regard to the prosecutorial strategy, Judge Ba said that the ICC could not substitute national systems. Each country must bring perpetrators before its own criminal courts, leaving the ICC as a court of last resort. The strategy consists of prosecuting individuals bearing the greatest responsibility, but states must determine other cases. In any case, the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) will be selective and concentrate on evidence. As to the role of deterrence, Judge Ba said that this was a general function of criminal law. Prevention is a priority for any judicial system, but the ICC needs particular support from other actors to maximize its impact, organize its network, have more impact and encourage communication. Judge Ba concluded his intervention by saying that other agendas such as humanitarian assistance or reconciliation should not compromise impunity. It will have a negative effect, support the perpetrator, and spur the cycle of violence.

**Messeh Abu Bakarr,
student**

Mr Abu Bakarr, who witnessed the war in Sierra Leone as a child, explained that the perception of children after a conflict was that the generation had failed them. The decision to start and make war had been taken by adults. He insisted that we need to move on and talk beyond "post-conflict", as we will never succeed unless we eradicate the sources of war. Mr Abu Bakarr demanded full participation for children in designing and implementing post-conflict measures.

Discussions, Q & A

The discussion focused on several issues. For instance, a lack of political will in taking children's perspectives into account in different processes and agendas was highlighted in the case of Guatemala, as it demonstrates the effects of a missed opportunity to implement effective police reform. In the case of Burundi, the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) highlighted problems in the long term, where resource constraints are the main obstacle, making it difficult to fine-tune approaches. The mid-term review of budget and sector programmes was mentioned as an opportunity to highlight certain issues and promote mainstreaming in the future. The victims vs. perpetrators dichotomy was mentioned, as this dilemma requires full attention and discussion needs to take place with regard to DDR and SSR processes. How should children that were perpetrators and members of a criminal structure be dealt with? How can DDR, SSR and TJ be effectively linked? How does the child perspective relate to this? Thirdly, the problem of long-term generational conflict was brought up. Specific contexts are often facing decades of conflict, which encompass the entire childhood. It was stated that unless the resulting problems are addressed adequately, a vicious cycle will emerge. By referring to the theory vs. practice dichotomy reflected in the differences between policies and real needs on the ground, participants agreed that local contexts and root causes of conflict need to be better understood. Moreover, the problem of perceiving children as a threat demands a shift in thinking. In relation to the mid-term review of Country Strategy Papers, indicators or benchmarks to assess whether processes are made in the right direction need to be established. Furthermore, the problem of impunity and experiences in Africa were addressed. Lastly, the importance of seeking acceptance of (international) policies in specific country contexts was dealt with. It was stated that no progress will be possible without the cooperation of national or local governments and political decision makers.

**Recommendations to relevant stakeholders
on children and post-conflict challenges
were:**

- The EU should make more use of the wealth of information, a forthcoming guideline developed by UNICEF, as well as already established tools on CAAC;
- Children's voices must be taken into account: regarding child participation in TJ Mechanisms, such as prosecutions, reparations, justice reforms, and truth seeking processes, the specific needs of children must be considered by adopting a child-sensitive approach; psycho-social assistance needs to be developed and implemented; follow-up and monitoring mechanisms, medical care, housing, educational support, etc. must go hand-in-hand with child-sensitive participation;
- Given the particular vulnerability of children, TJ experts need to work closely together with protection experts to prevent further marginalization and victimization of children;
- Children's perspective remains underdeveloped in the EU SSR approach; here, more needs to be done at both the policy and operational levels; specific manuals and guidelines need to be drafted;
- Training on children's rights needs to be provided both through police trainings and community policing;
- SSR requires a more upstream approach, i.e. providing for more civilian control; here, the role of parliaments was emphasized;
- Governmental collaboration with the ICC needs to be improved, as the ICC does not have an enforcement authority and depends on national governments to maximize its impact;
- Other agendas, such as humanitarian assistance, etc. should not compromise on impunity;
- Provide further support and enhance the "integrated approach";
- Revisit the SSR agenda;
- Take into account contexts and needs assessments as part of the planning phase, which needs to be done before the beginning of actual implementation;
- Address the issue of impunity as a priority, balance this with other agendas, but do not compromise;
- Cooperate with experts in the area of CAAC, develop more tools and specific guidance, particularly in field contexts;
- Take a leading role in enforcing mechanisms of CAAC through the leverage of third countries;
- Mainstream CAAC issues in other agendas;
- Include the children's perspective in the review of the European Security Strategy (ESS);
- Fully include CAAC in the upcoming mid-term review of the Country Strategy Papers, as these documents will have long-term effects that make addressing CAAC issues even more important.

WG D – EU Responses to CAAC Discussed in Two Country Contexts

This working group, chaired by Philippe Bartholmé, EPLO, focussed on the EU response in the area of CAAC, as well as on the NGO-EU cooperation in two countries: Congo and Chad. ESDP missions are present in both nations and, in the case of Congo, have been given a mandate with a special focus on children. Moreover, both countries are priorities under the EU CAAC Guidelines. While Congo has been a priority for the EU since the Guidelines were endorsed in 2003, Chad was added to the priority list only in December 2007. EU MS, the Commission and other international institutions, including the UN and a wide array of NGOs, operate in these countries to protect children, prevent further violence, and deliver emergency assistance.

Rebecca Besant, Africa Programme Associate, SFCG

Ms Besant gave an overview of SFCG's activities in Africa, focusing particularly on activities of the NGO's largest programme in Congo. Media programmes there take child protection and involvement very seriously and even involve former child combatants. Ms Besant described the complexity of Congo and the difficulties it brings as a work environment, and she emphasized that coordination was essential. She said that recent Commission's calls for proposals demonstrated that people in Brussels and on the ground knew about the subject. Nevertheless, she also stated that in terms of funding, the calls for Congo were closed and no opportunities were open for Chad. Continued child recruitment remains an important issue in the east of Congo, and Ms Besant said that this required a more holistic approach endorsed by all actors present.

Katri Tukiainen, EUPOL RD Congo/EUSCOMMISSIONRD Congo HR/CAAC expert

Ms Tukiainen understood her intervention as bringing news from the field to the conference audience, and she described her most recent travels to Goma. Explaining her mandate, Ms Tukiainen said that it allowed her to provide technical assistance to armed forces in Congo. She explained further that two more civilian colleagues carry out similar duties, i.e. to advise both ESDP missions (EUPOL and EUSEC) on specific issues such as gender, PPO and, in her case, CAAC. Ms Tukiainen explained that Congo process was not yet complete. Since 2006, initiatives on UNSCR 1612 were coordinated by the Child Protection Section in MONUC. Her function, next to providing advice and training to civilian and military mission staff, is mainly to facilitate information sharing and persuade different actors to meet and talk to each other. Concerning coordination on the ground, Ms Tukiainen said that it was crucial to respect the "order" of different actors present on the ground. The MONUC leadership in the area of CAAC needs to be respected by all other European or international actors, and the inter-agency action plan in this regard was very important as well.

Thierry Baud, Council Secretariat, Planning Unit CPPC

Mr Baud insisted that in any conflict situation, security had to be established first in order to have a better chance of solving problematic human rights and CAAC issues. In this regard, the EU has an integrated policy approach in its missions, which is reflected in the mission statements. Mr Baud agreed that experts serving on the ground had to be provided with a better Brussels back-up, but he also pointed out that it was mainly up to the EU MS to decide on this. He also touched upon the issue of resources for such posts: asking MS directly for money was legally impossible under the present Council structure.

**LtCol Francois-Xavier Thomas,
Head of the CJ9 – CIMIC OHQ EUFOR
Tchad/RCA**

LtCol Thomas started his presentation by giving an overview of the Chad Mission, explaining the role of the CMCO/CIMIC efforts therein. He described mission structures both in Chad and Paris and the liaison mechanisms towards Brussels. LtCol Thomas explained that currently, there were no CIMIC projects being implemented, as no budget was foreseen for similar activities under the EU ATHENA system. Funding might be coming from EU MS, but LtCol Thomas also referred to the problem of competition with locally present humanitarian NGOs, which were already doing a lot of work. He continued by saying that human rights/CAAC issues were taken into consideration at the operational level, and that political advisors acted as experts, for instance on gender issues. He described how meetings with several different actors during the mission planning phase had taken place in Paris to ensure that the civilian side, Commission and UN agencies present in the DRC were on board. As a matter of information, LtCol Thomas passed around a handbook for soldiers in the Chad Mission, which includes sections on human rights and CAAC.

Discussions, Q & A

The lively discussions focused on several issues such as: What was Ms Tukiainen's role on the ground in ensuring the CAAC Guidelines? Given the lack of expertise on CAAC in the current CPPC, would the creation of a CAAC expert position advising the whole Council Secretariat make sense? How was the expert position of Ms Tukiainen created in the first place? Would she advise to have similar positions established for all ESDP missions? Would she advise to have a similar post established for the Chad mission? In terms of leadership on the ground: is the leading role of MONUC in Congo accepted by all present actors? Is a facilitator really necessary? What do trainings look like? Are they open to local police and do they include children?

Ms Tukiainen replied that her work on the ground consisted primarily in working directly with the two Heads of Mission in close daily contact. She gives daily briefings to generals and Heads of Mission and annexes her reports to the monthly EUPOL report. She is in regular contact with her Congolese counterparts serving in ministries and the army. On the MONUC leading the process, Ms Tukiainen said that the EU was well represented at the monthly MONUC meetings and the weekly OCHA and UN Protection Cluster meetings. The leadership of MONUC was reflecting the (power) relationships on the ground and was not contested, according to Ms Tukiainen, by any locally present actor. She added that a special working group on 1612 had been set up in Congo under the MONUC Child Protection Unit's leadership, and that monthly EU-HR group meetings initiated by the Portuguese Presidency were very efficient. Ms Tukiainen also proposed that bilateral and international meetings should go into further details on how the EU could improve cooperation. In this regard, she particularly encouraged other, less active Member States Representations to engage more in the dialogue. As to the question whether a CAAC expert should be deployed with every ESDP mission, Ms Tukiainen replied that considering the country contexts was crucial. In any case, a better "formation package" in terms of human rights, child protection and CAAC should be provided by officials coming from Brussels. Ideally, each person serving in a mission should bring this as a basis.

**Recommendations presented by
Rapporteur Mirko Cigler
to the plenary**

Mr Baud was very much in favour of establishing a permanent position of a CAAC expert in the Council Secretariat. The best position would probably be in the office of the Personal Representative for Human Rights. As regards training, it was stated that EGT was indeed missing out on opportunities. Making sure that national mission staff are well trained still remains the responsibility of the Member States. In Finland, joint training on human rights for judges, police, politicians and the army is provided, but this is an exception in the EU. Seconding experts from the Member States was in general perceived as a very positive measure, but a scant possibility to influence decision-making within the Member States makes lobbying in this regard difficult. A final discussion focused on the revision of the Council Recommendations on EU-NGO cooperation.

Specific recommendations were made with regard to:

- **Trainings:** the importance of pre-training and in-mission-training for mission personnel not only on "general" issues such as Human Rights and gender but also on CAAC issues should be kept in mind; here, some possibilities need to be considered:
 - In general, CAAC should be taken up as a general topic of trainings;
 - Local contexts need to be better considered and analyzed;
 - Lessons learned from experiences made should be better reflected and picked up; in this regard, the very positive example of some very engaged EU Member States such as Finland and Austria (in terms of in-country trainings) should be followed; in addition, the knowledge and expertise of the NGO community should be used by the Member States in centralized training efforts;
- **Reporting:** format, content, and recipient needs must be improved and made more user-friendly;
- **Communication between Brussels and field mission areas** needs to be improved; the improved communication concerns "both directions"; in addition, the Member States should consider further expansion of secondment and appointment of expert personnel;
- **Awareness raising:** declassifying Council documents on human rights and CAAC issues in ESDP missions should enable the broadest possible audience to step in; a continued preparing and elaborating of pocket-cards on the issue of CAAC for mission and operations personnel is important;
- **EU-NGO cooperation:** it is time to revise PSC recommendations from 2006 in this regard and update the language.

A short film on the complex issue of child soldiers in the DRC was introduced and presented by Bukeni Waruzi, Congolese activist on child soldiers and Program Coordinator for Africa and Middle East, WITNESS. After the film, the Rapporteurs of the four working groups outlined and summarized recommendations and discussions that took place in their respective groups. After the presentations, discussions were opened up to all participants. The session was chaired by Vera Remškar of the Slovenian "Together" Foundation.

Summary of recommendations by the Chair and public discussion

The subsequent discussion focused mainly on EU and NGO challenges on the ground. The EU's role within the "1612" mechanism, i.e. in the implementation of monitoring and reporting, was highlighted. It was proposed that the EU take on a leading role in focusing on strengthening the implementation of the Resolution. In general, the EU should go further in its advocacy, beyond the six grave violations listed in the 1612 Resolution. The reporting of lessons learned and successes/failures in concrete cases and country contexts needs to be generally improved. In addition, the forthcoming benchmarks must determine matters of accountability and transparency. Child participation must not be an empty formula. It is essential to set up cooperation within the conflict continuum – the European programme on conflict prevention should be mentioned and taken into account in this regard, as it is directly related to the Guidelines. The implementation of the Paris Principles is equally necessary.

Moving to the realities on the ground, it was stated that the needs of children both during and after a conflict have to be addressed first and foremost in their own communities. Conditionality on access to resources was mentioned as being important in this regard. The question of how the impact of programmes can be measured needs to be clarified. Discussions regarding the establishment of a Humanitarian Forum were divided. This kind of forum already existing we have to keep in mind that humanitarian aid should remain impartial. In the Commission's view, coordination should be understood less as "steering of instruments" but rather as effective collaboration on the ground. The Commission also suggested that the inputs from the Joint Council Secretariat – Commission Services Working Paper on Security and Development drafted under the Portuguese Presidency should be used rather than inventing new structures and mechanisms in Brussels. With regard to the Council Conclusions on Security and Development, the Commission and the Council are about to launch a study focusing on five countries, analyzing the security and development nexus, including humanitarian aid.

In addition, funding of the institution is linked to specific policies and approaches. There are specific instruments in the Commission which are directed to funding activities such as the one related on child soldiers. The Commission's officials explained that the main and specific instrument for humanitarian aid is ECHO and even if there are other instruments such as Stability Instrument, this would have not been the appropriate one to use in emergencies. Distinguishing between direct and indirect support for CAAC was crucial: through ESDP operations and the Stability Instrument activities, one needs to ensure sensitivity to the needs of children and a clear integration of the child rights perspective. Activities in the area of CAAC are also mentioned in the Annual Conflict Prevention Report, which is currently being drafted.

NGOs also need to understand the challenges of Delegations on the ground, which often lack resources and staff. To a certain degree, however, decentralization has commenced, and Delegations now have more freedom and may liaise directly with NGO networks (not individual NGOs, though) on the ground. This also represents feedback on UNSCR 1612, which served as a basis, together with the Paris Principles, for elaborating the Commission's SSR approach. Challenges remain in the Congolese programmes, where long-term re-integration in societies and the mainstreaming of needs of former (child) combatants into the EU long-term geographical instruments must be guaranteed. Unfortunately, conflict prevention and peacebuilding have been taken out as a mainstreaming area in the EU Consensus on Development and in many of the new financial instruments. ECHO operates following its specific financial and operational procedures to implement humanitarian aid projects through its partners with regard with to emergency contexts. More needs to be done in terms of best practices and learning, and UNICEF announced a best practice document that will provide valuable insights. Preserving the humanitarian space in CIV-MIL relations was mentioned as an important principle. Likewise, there is a need for trainings and exchange of information, while keeping the use of military assets for humanitarian purposes as applicable only to very specific situations.

3rd Plenary Session and Concluding Remarks

The concluding plenary chaired by Ondina Blokar Drobič, Slovenian Presidency, saw representatives from the Commission, an NGO, the Council Secretariat and the incoming Presidency present their conclusions on the conference and a vision of future collaboration between NGOs and the EU in the area of CAAC.

Veronique Arnault, Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, DG RELEX, Commission

Ms Arnault outlined three outstanding dimensions in the effective integration of CAAC issues into EU policies: the multilateral nature of cooperation in the field, justice delivered through the ICC or international tribunals and the number of actors involved, be they civilian or military, NGOs or IOs, etc. Ms Arnault referred to the Commission Communication "A Special Place for Children in EU External Action as a solid framework for the consideration of children's rights in Commission actions. Nevertheless, there remain at least three issues of great importance: the mainstreaming of children's rights into various policies, improved implementation and efficiency, and accountability. The Communication provides a firm basis for the consideration of children's rights issues in the mid-term review of the Country Strategy Papers, which are the guiding document for the EU's cooperation with a certain third country. Another aim was to bring together all Commission services, including ECHO: a formalized process of coordination within the Commission has been underway since February 2008. Ms Arnault went on to mention the human rights dialogues and consultations, where the rights of children have been systematically taken up, and where these specific rights often provide the only ground for constructive cooperation. In terms of improved implementation, trainings, communication and information sharing with actors on the ground, Ms Arnault referred to several recent initiatives, such as a specific training module on children's rights specifically designed for officers working in the RELEX family. Collaboration with UNICEF in producing a Toolkit on children's rights will be concluded in two years. Delegations were encouraged to set up a focal point on children's rights, a position that might facilitate local cooperation with CSOs.

Better coordination among donors on both the UN and a follow-up to the Paris Agenda is crucial. As regards the issue raised about the inadequate flexibility of EC funding, Ms Arnault reminded the participants that strict funding regulations applied to all calls for proposals, for the sake of transparency and good administration. However, Ms Arnault called on all NGOs to better coordinate their efforts in order to achieve greater coherence when applying for funding. The European Forum on the Rights of the Child takes place every six months and provides further opportunities for CSOs to communicate with the Commission, but also among themselves. In concluding, Ms Arnault said that many things still needed to be done immediately, and she promised to follow up on the identification of children's rights focal points in Delegations and to continue discussing the organization of relevant trainings. She also pointed out the lack of visibility of activities undertaken by the Commission in this implementation field and confirmed her interest also in considering further actions in this regard. Mrs Arnault finally warned about the progressive 'politicisation' of the work of UNSC Working Committee and stressed the importance of supporting the mandate of the UNSR on children and armed conflict.

**Alessandro Rossi,
Nonviolent Peaceforce/EPLO**

Alluding to the RoCS process, the framework in which this conference was initiated, Mr Rossi stated that already by making this conference happen, a successful example of EU-NGO cooperation has been established. By turning to the situation in the field, Mr Rossi said that for many non-European organizations implementing projects on the ground, the functioning of the EU was not at all clear, and that much more needed to be done in terms of visibility. Activities in favour of CAAC have to be planned and implemented throughout the conflict continuum, but this process is not as smooth as it could be. Practitioners recommended envisioning a coordinated approach with the multilateral system including NGOs. This should be done by the creation of a protection enabling environment in mind, integrating all other policies. Thus, specialized agencies such as NP should not be isolated but rather integrated into the overall aim of making things better for vulnerable groups, particularly children. A further comment from the field referred to the issue of governments signing up to UN processes such as the 1612 mechanisms, which, in Mr Rossi's words, is not enough to get a clean conscience from Brussels or other capitals. Referring to Sri Lanka as an example, Mr Rossi explained that the enforcement of UN Resolutions in the field did not come automatically. This does not mean that the legal framework does not help. On the contrary, it means that everyone has to invest more effort in the study of the legal framework, thus helping to improve its translation for the local beneficiaries and communities.

Mr Rossi said that he saw a problem of a standing capacity of immediately deployable advisors and experts, referring to working group discussions where the Commission said that ECHO was the only actor with all the expertise in humanitarian emergencies. Limited resources (in the field) are directly linked with political priorities. The obvious connection here is to fill the gap with CSO actors. Concrete opportunities coming up in the following months include a review of the ESDP Checklist and the Implementation Guidelines. Local CSOs should have more access. Integrating child protection in all policy documents should furthermore be assured in the ECHO planning, the planning for the Stability Instrument and the CSPs. Due to their active engagement in the UN SC Working Group on CAAC, France as the incoming EU Presidency provides further opportunities on CAAC issues. As the EU Presidency, France has a realistic chance to streamline both efforts and bring more UN expertise to the EU. Exercising this influence on the design of the EEAS is a particular challenge. The European Security Strategy should also make a clear reference to Human Security – if not to the term itself, at least to the rights of vulnerable groups such as children. After this conference, Mr Rossi would like to see the impact of this process raised to a higher political level so that the role of Civil Society is recognized not only in the second pillar by CIVCOM but also in the PSC and High Representatives' offices, as CSO input could be important there as well. Within the Commission, the Peacebuilding Partnership could and should be an instrument to be used not only by the conflict management units but also by the entire Commission.

**Veronica Cody,
DG E IX Planning Unit, Council Secretariat**

Ms Cody began her intervention by describing the long process within the Council to realize that human rights, gender and CAAC issues were "hard" security issues influencing policies on operations. They are now believed to feed into the six priorities for civilian action in the ESDP, i.e. rule of law, civil administration, civil protection, monitoring and strengthening of the EU SRSG Office. The objective of ESDP missions in conflict areas is to establish security and stability for the entire population, and for the most vulnerable parts, i.e. women and children, in particular. Children are the least vocal, yet they have a special status, as they constitute the future of any society. Concentrating on developing capabilities reflected in the Civilian Headline Goal and the Military Headline Goal in the domains of lawyers, police, magistrates, military, gendarmerie, etc. the EU learned that human rights experts are extremely important to the missions. This has taken a great deal of persuasion on the part of the EU Member States, but now human rights experts are deployed to most missions. However, similar experts on CAAC issues in missions are still missing. Ms Cody stated that this conference was good and necessary; however, more needed to be done, particularly in terms of awareness-raising in the 27 EU Member States. Nothing would happen unless the Member States were willing to make a difference. Secondly, Ms Cody made a plea on behalf of Heads of Mission and the EU Special Representatives to improve the mainstreaming of human rights into EU missions. Firstly, an assessment needs to be done to find out which human rights are being threatened in a particular conflict situation. The same must apply to children's rights: what particular children's rights are under threat and what kind of threats are these? She said that the more specific these assessments are, the more can be done on the ground.

Ms Cody described a recent training of mission personnel on gender issues in Brussels. She said that now would be the right moment to do the same on CAAC, and she affirmed that NGO participation here would be more than welcome. With regard to educating HoMs and civilian and military "planners", Ms Cody stated that mandates were generally observed, as they were held accountable by the PSC and the Foreign Ministers. This means that the sooner mandates on human rights and child protection are inserted into the initial planning documents – from the fact-finding mission report right through to the crisis management concept to the CONOPS (Concept for Operations) through to the OPLAN (Operational Plan) and down to the mandate of the HoM – the better. If we wait until the planning documents are already in place, the human rights elements will be bolted on at the end and will never be mainstreamed. Even the most willing HoMs will not be able to integrate these considerations because they are not a part of their mandate. This is critical from both practical and operational points of view. For field-based NGOs to do briefings of ESDP missions was, in Ms Cody's eyes, a very good idea. This could complement trainings on gender at the HQ and field levels.

On a final note, Ms Cody said that even if it had taken some time to fully appreciate the importance of human rights in ESDP missions, the EU was now fully acknowledging it, and it was now trying to pass this lesson on to others, in particular in its relations to the African Union. The new joint EU-Africa Strategy and the Action Plan include specific elements to build up the AU's capabilities to carry out its own peace operations. Moreover, the joint Council-Commission Delegation to the AU in Addis Ababa has not only military but also civilian capabilities, including human rights experts. Moreover, one human rights expert has been included in the EU trainings for the African Standby Force envisaged for the next two years.

Jacques Pellet, COHOM, incoming French Presidency

Concerning the commitment of the incoming French Presidency to CAAC issues, Mr Pellet assured that the topic would be taken up, and the processes initiated under the Slovenian Presidency continued. Mr Pellet made a reference to France's activities regarding the issue of CAAC at the UN level over the past years: lobbying for Resolution 1612 and particularly for what the Resolution means in the environment of the UN SC. Mr Pellet called it a "mini-revolution" in the working framework of the SC, as a subsidiary working group mainly dealing with human rights issues has been set up for the first time. Mr Pellet called this a very important, yet very fragile breakthrough. The working group, which discusses country contexts relevant to CAAC that are not on the agenda of the SC, recently delisted the Ivory Coast from its agenda. However, two more countries were added: Afghanistan and the Central African Republic. It still needs to be decided whether the scope of the working group may be expanded in the future to go beyond the six crimes listed in Resolution 1612. French Foreign Minister Kouchner recently stated that France would warmly welcome a similar expansion. However, Mr Pellet believed that a great deal of persuasion, particularly by the five permanent members of the SC, was still necessary.

At the EU level, Mr Pellet promised a follow-up to the Paris Conference, which took place in February 2007. Today, 66 countries subscribe to the Paris Commitments, but France would like to push further and will organize, together with UNICEF and the SRSG, a roundtable in July, assembling all main stakeholders, such as donors, recipient states, NGOs, and UN agencies. The idea is to identify gaps in terms of needs and capacities and to see how these gaps could be filled. The recommendations of this expert meeting should then be transported to a ministerial meeting during the next session of UNGA in autumn this year. Furthermore, as to the follow-up, Mr Pellet reiterated that the processes commenced by Slovenia would be continued by the French Presidency. Again, implementation is to be seen as the key-challenge. Here, Mr Pellet said that the EU Guidelines had to be made known and effectively enhanced and promoted by EU MS diplomatic personnel. Executing the Implementation Strategy is a further priority, as well as improving the synergies with the UN 1612 mechanism. Obviously, what the EU was doing on the ground should not duplicate efforts undertaken by the UN, but support them. Knowledge dissemination of who is doing what on the ground is another challenge to the incoming Presidency, particularly as there are so many bilateral actions underway. France itself is currently planning two projects on CAAC: a reintegration programme in Kinshasa, including work in Burundi and Northern Uganda, and another programme in Khartoum, covering Sudan and Chad. Close cooperation with NGOs in both projects is highly desired by France. Mr Pellet summarised by mentioning the keywords of the French Presidency, namely implementation, long-term sustainable programming, and reinsertion.

Recommendations

A first draft of these recommendations was provided by the Chair of the second plenary, taking into account the four WG reports, as well as the public debates held after their presentation. This first set of recommendations was presented to three Council Working Groups (PMG, CIVCOM and COHOM) in Brussels after the conference. In a second consultation process, the recommendations were shared with all conference participants. Below is the consolidated version of the recommendations.

Recommendations	To whom
1 Reiterate that the fight against impunity for crimes against children is an absolute priority and should be adequately balanced with other agendas, but not compromised;	All EU actors
2 Strengthen the policy <i>implementation</i> framework by introducing benchmarks – where relevant – in policy areas related to children, particularly in the priority countries of the EU in this area; furthermore, implementation should be enhanced by ensuring effective follow up, evaluation and structured reporting, e.g. on lessons learned on the ground, as well as taking into account the perspective of local communities. Here, the EU-UNICEF toolkit is to be seen as a welcome step forward;	All EU actors (EC, Council, Member States)
3 Increase involvement of EU institutions in third countries, i.e. EC Delegations and MS Missions, particularly in regard to liaising with local and international NGOs working in the area of CAAC on the ground;	EC Delegations, Member States Missions
4 Ensure the mainstreaming of CAAC in other agendas by supporting an integrated approach in the areas of human rights, security, development, and humanitarian assistance with a focus on CAAC as a strong element; in this respect, ensure that the existing framework for security sector reform takes a child sensitive approach;	All EU actors
5 Ensure better coordination between Brussels and the field; in this regard, it is necessary to declassify documents on HR in ESDP missions;	Council
6 Continue instructing HoMs and HoDs to engage with local NGOs and other actors involved in Child Protection networks. Where applicable, this should take place within the UN SC Resolution 1612 mechanism; discuss how the EU can be involved in the 1612 process and how to create synergies outside 1612, particularly in countries that are on the EU's Priority List, but not dealt with in the SC WG on CAAC, such as Israel/Palestine (steps to be taken by the EU have already been outlined in the 2006 Implementation Strategy, particularly recommendations 2 and 10, but need to be implemented);	Council, ESDP missions (HoM), EC
7 HoMs in third countries should report to Brussels, via their capitals, on child rights violations on a regular basis, and seek information from NGOs and UN agencies on the ground for this purpose. This would enhance the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict in both priority and non-priority countries, as instructed in the Guidelines themselves;	HoMs
8 Create an informal EU mechanism dealing also with CAAC issues to put in place clear procedures to be followed in all cases in the event of a crisis, based on early planning, coordination between humanitarian stakeholders and efficient division of labour in order to ensure a rapid and effective response. This mechanism should bring together key decision makers from the EU Presidency, Council Secretariat, Council groups (PSC, CIVCOM, COHOM, geographical groups), EC (DG DEV, DG RELEX, ECHO, EuropeAid) and relevant civil society;	All EU actors
9 Revise the Recommendations for Enhancing Co-operation with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the Framework of EU Civilian Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention with a view to improving and further developing cooperation between the EU and relevant civil society organisations at both strategic and operational levels;	Council (CIVCOM, Council Secretariat)

Recommendations	To whom
10 Consider providing long-term and more flexible funding to ensure easier and timely access for NGOs operating in the field and to ensure the sustainability of projects. The EU should identify funding gaps with regard to CAAC and seek to bridge them with special (more flexible) funds. This is especially relevant when funding DDR, and the reintegration element in particular; girls should be given special consideration when funding DDR.	EC, Member States
11 Make use of a mid-term review of the EC's Country Strategy Papers and the upcoming discussion on the European Security Strategy to ensure that CAAC is included as a long-term priority;	EC, all EU actors
12 Ensure that a conflict-sensitive approach is adopted for child participation and that the involvement of children in remote areas is ensured. In line with the applicable policy provisions, child participation should be promoted whenever possible. In this context, specific obstacles to the participation of children in a number of programmes (such as education, DDR/SSR, Truth and Reconciliation processes, etc.) should be identified and addressed on a country by country basis; also consider the importance of the participation of children in transitional justice mechanisms, such as prosecution, truth commissions, reparation programmes, and institutional reform efforts in order to achieve reconciliation in divided societies, long-term stability and sustainable peace;	All EU actors
13 Ensure that a holistic approach is adopted throughout the field project planning phase, including the integration of lessons learnt, best practice, contextual understanding and needs assessment; this would mean moving away from the allocation of funding in terms of pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict timeframes and moving towards ensuring a general humanitarian and human rights-based funding framework;	All EU actors
14 Ensure also in the future the regular organisation of specific EU training on CAAC issues for EC staff in Delegations and for ESDP mission staff in third countries, but also for EU Member States personnel both in the field and in Brussels (building upon esp. Recommendation 17 of the Implementation Strategy); specialized CSOs should be closely involved in these trainings both in Brussels and in the field;	EC, Council (planning units)
15 Integrate Child Protection advisors in ESDP missions along the lines of the EUPOL/EUSEC missions in DRC, if applicable. Child Protection concerns should be taken into account at all levels when planning a new mission, but should also be considered for the existing missions when mandates are coming up for renewal; mandates for Child Protection advisors need to be carefully adapted to both the country situation and the specific mandate of a mission (relevance of military/civilian aspects, training of EU and third country personnel, etc.) furthermore, these experts in the field need more back-up at HQ level, e.g. a counterpart in the Council Secretariat;	Council, Member States
16 Reiterate that the fight against impunity for crimes against children is an absolute priority and should be adequately balanced with other agendas, but not compromised;	All EU actors
17 The EU should make full use of all diplomatic tools listed in the Guidelines to strengthen the rights of children affected by conflict (demarches, statements and political dialogue at all levels). EU institutions and Member States should mainstream the issue of children affected by armed conflict in their diplomatic relations with third countries, using their knowledge and exerting their influence to ensure that duty-bearers fulfil their obligation to provide for the protection of children affected by armed conflict;	EU institutions, Member States
18 Consider developing a strategy to promote the engagement of non-state armed groups on CAAC issues. Such a strategy would support direct NGO efforts and ensure that terrorist blacklists do not impede legitimate NGO efforts.	All EU actors



Annex

Speakers' Bios

Veronique Arnault studied political science and English literature in both France and the UK. She began her career in 1980 as a French diplomat and then joined the EC in 1983 in the team for the enlargement of the European Union with Spain and Portugal, in the field of fisheries. She subsequently worked in the External Relations Department of the EC responsible for trade relations with the US and Japan. She became Head of Unit for "Analysis and Policy Planning" for External Relations dealing, in particular, with the preparation of the G7/G8 Summits. In 1999, she became Deputy Chief of Staff for David Byrne, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection. In 2002, she started working for the EC Department for Consumer Protection, where she was mainly responsible for the development of the European consumer strategy, relations with consumer organisations and external relations. On 1 March 2008, she became Director of Multilateral Relations and Human Rights in the Directorate-General for External Relations. Mrs Arnault is married, with 2 children.

Judge since 1985, Mr **Amady BA** (Senegal) was President of the Departmental Court, Judge at the Regional Court of Dakar, as well as President of Chamber, Criminal Section, followed by the Commercial Section of the aforesaid jurisdiction, concurrently in charge of urgent procedures (requests, emergency proceedings, and seizures) until 1997. As Head of the Judicial Training School (École de la Magistrature), he negotiated and sealed partnership agreements between the Judicial Training Centre of Dakar and various other institutions with the same mission. In addition to his mission as a consultant for the UNDP at the Judicial Regional High School in Porto Novo (Benin) for the design of programmes, he was an expert member of the cell of support for the Justice Ministry of Guinea (October 1998-October 2002). Mr Ba was detached on November 2002 to join the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) in November 2002 as Head of the Training and Technical Assistance Department in charge of the French-speaking countries. Mr Ba joined the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court on 17 March, and more specifically, the Jurisdiction, Complementarity and Cooperation Division (JCCD), as Head of the Cooperation Section. He currently works under the direction and supervision of the Director of the Division, Mrs Béatrice Le Fraper du Hellen.

Jane Backhurst is currently Director of World Vision, EU Liaison Office in Brussels. She has worked in the areas of development cooperation, humanitarian aid, and conflict prevention since 1990, from within the EU institutions, the UN, and civil society. She worked with the EU Vice President for External Relations, the EU's relief agency, ECHO, from within the UN, during the Bosnian war, and was the EU Country Coordinator for the Baltic States. Jane has been advocating on children's rights in the EU's development and humanitarian policy since 1997, when she set up the Brussels office of World Vision, an international humanitarian aid and development agency. She helped create the Brussels Coalition on Children and Armed Conflict, and later the Child Protection in Crises coalition. Jane studied EC law and politics in France (IEHEI), in the UK (University of Manchester 1990 BSc (Hons.)), London School of Economics (Political Economy of Development MSc), Conflict Transformation (Bradford University), in Tunisia (Bourguiba Institute), and in Belgium (children's rights at Ghent University).

Philippe Bartholmé is Policy Officer of 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. Philippe joined EPLO in 2005 and is responsible for the EPLO working group *Civilian Interventions for Sustainable Peace*, which follows the ESDP and institutional developments in the European Union. Since the Luxemburg Presidency of the European Union in 2005, Philippe has been closely involved in the development of cooperation between civil society and the EU in crisis management and conflict prevention known today as the *Role of Civil Society – RoCS* – process. Philippe also coordinates the work of EPLO on the new EU financial instruments for external action.

Thierry Baud is Lieutenant-Colonel of the French National Gendarmerie working as a seconded national expert at the EU General Secretariat of the EU Council/Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) since April 2005. He is more particularly in charge of providing support of the Secretariat of the EU Council in Brussels to the EUPOL RD Congo mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), deployed by the EU to assist in the reform process of the Congolese police in its Justice Interface. Mr Thierry BAUD is a police expert with a mission experience as he has been previously deployed twice in BiH with IPTF and EUPM as well as within UNMIK police in Kosovo.

Rebecca Besant is currently Program Manager of Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Africa Program, managing the programme support component of the Africa team and providing strategic and organizational leadership to the nine Africa country programmes and four persons of the Africa Support team. Within this role, she leads proposal development, ensures the quality and accuracy of reporting, provides support for monitoring and evaluation efforts, and encourages learning between country programmes. Rebecca is based in Monrovia, Liberia, and travels frequently to each of SFCG's country programmes to provide them with direct support. Rebecca started her career with the SFCG six years ago in the Washington DC office as Program Associate for West Africa. Since then, she has worked as Program Manager for Sub-Saharan Africa and West Africa before taking on her current function in 2006. Prior to the SFCG, she worked in the area of development for an environmental conservation organisation in the United States.

Ondina Blokar Drobič, born on 25 November 1968, is currently Director General of the Directorate for International Law and Protection of Interests of the Slovenian MFA. She graduated from the Faculty of Law, University of Ljubljana, in 1993. Between 2000 and 2005, she was posted at the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Slovenia to the United Nations in New York, and later became Head of the International Law Department of the Slovenian MFA.

Inger Buxton is a Swedish national expert working on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, including SSR and DDR in the Unit for Crisis Management and Conflict Prevention in the EC's Directorate General for External Relations. Inger Buxton is also Co-Chair of the OECD-DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (CPDC), which has developed the DAC SSR and Governance Guidelines and the subsequent Handbook on SSR. Ms Buxton has previously been working on conflict prevention and peace-building issues in different capacities in the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Save the Children, as well as the UK-based think-tank and NGO SaferWorld.

Mirko Cigler is Chairman of the Political Military Group at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the EU during the Slovenian Presidency. He studied at the Military Academy in Belgrade and continued his military career as Military Attaché in China and Iran. He joined the Slovenian MFA in 1992 and worked on the international security agenda first in the OSCE in Vienna and in NATO in Brussels and later headed the departments for NATO and North and South America at the MFA.

Veronica Cody assumed her current function as Head of Unit and Acting Deputy Director of DGE IX, Civilian Crisis Management – Horizontal Issues, in the Council of the EU in April 2004. Before that, she worked as Counsellor in the Cabinet of the Secretary General/High Representative, Javier Solana, where she was responsible for Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Mediterranean). From July 1994 to September 1999, she worked as Assistant Principal in DG B of the Council, Fisheries Directorate, Internal and External Policy, again on Horizontal Issues.

Sophie De Coninck is a Belgian national with a background in economics. She has worked for the FAO in Madagascar and the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the ILO in Ethiopia and Congo. Since 2004, Sophie has specialized in DDR for children in Central Africa. She is currently based in Kinshasa, where she manages a project on "Prevention of Recruitment and Economic Reintegration of Children Affected by Armed Conflict" with particular emphasis on employment support services.

Jovan Divjak, born in 1937, declares himself a Bosnian, although this category does not exist under the Constitution. He is Executive Director of the NGO "Education Builds Bosnia-Herzegovina" established in 1994 with the mission *children of war victims – our permanent concern*. He completed his military studies in 1959 and served as a professional in the former Yugoslav People's Army until 1984, mostly in the military education sector. From April 1992 to 11 March 1997, he held a high-ranking post in the Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Since his retirement in 1997, Mr Divjak has devoted himself entirely to helping children and families of war victims as well as the disabled and talented children in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He has been a prominent NGO activist working towards the development of civil society in Bosnia-Herzegovina, with particular focus on the issues of education, rights of the child, and human rights.

Sylvie Fouet is Programme Adviser at the UNICEF Brussels Office liaising with the EU institutions. She covers humanitarian affairs as well as children in crisis and post crisis situations. She is chairing the Brussels-based UN policy group around humanitarian – development nexus. Prior to Belgium, she has been posted in the field for the last 15 years, mostly in the Middle East and Africa. Her expertise is emergency, child protection and social policy. Prior to joining UNICEF, Ms Fouet has worked for the EC and assisted the EU Special Envoy to the Middle East, when in Jerusalem. She received her M Phil (with honors) in Political Science from the University of Paris – Sorbonne, M Phil in Sociology from the Advanced School of Social Sciences in Paris and also holds a master's degree in International Relations from the London School of Economics.

Anne Grandjean is the Justice for Children focal point at UNICEF New York HQ. She has been working as a child protection specialist for the last 10 years, including with UNICEF in Montenegro, Iran, Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territory. She is also co-author of a book on the rights of children deprived of liberty, and holds a Masters in International Relations from the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva.

Peter Grk joined the Slovenian MFA in 2000, where he has been engaged particularly with EU affairs. He was posted in Ankara, Turkey, in 2001. During the Danish EU Presidency, he was posted in Copenhagen. Mr Grk was actively involved in accession negotiations between Slovenia and the EU. From 2003 to 2005, he was Deputy European Correspondent at the Department for EU Affairs and from 2005 to 2006, he was appointed as European Correspondent and Head of the Unit for the CFSP at the Department for EU Affairs. In 2006, Mr Grk was appointed Head of the Slovenian CIVCOM delegation. Mr Grk was born in Postojna, Slovenia. He has a degree in political science.

Dr **Hadewych Hazelzet** is an EU official at the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union. She is currently seconded to the German Foreign Office, where she works as a senior expert in the political department, Unit for the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). At the Council Secretariat, she was the desk officer for human rights (2002-2006) and trade with developing countries (2001-2002). She obtained a doctoral degree from the European University Institute, Florence, Italy (2001) and a master's degree from the University of Chicago, USA (1996), and the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands (1995). She has published various articles on foreign policy, human rights, and sanctions.

Anje Jooya-Kruiter currently works as a programme officer at the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM, Maastricht, the Netherlands) for the Development Policy and International Relations Programme. She focuses mostly on issues of Capacity Development, Technical Assistance and Fragile States. Prior to joining the ECDPM, she worked at the Department of Development Studies of the Wageningen Agricultural University, the International Cooperation Department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in Ghana.

Dr **Riina Kionka** is Personal Representative of SG/HR Javier Solana on Human Rights in the area of the CFSP at the EU Council Secretariat. She obtained her BA in International Relations and German from Michigan State University, and her MA and PhD in International Relations (specialising in the Soviet Union) from Columbia University, New York. During the fall and demise of the Soviet bloc, she wrote on Baltic affairs as an analyst at the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute in Munich. In 1993, Kionka joined the Estonian Foreign Ministry in Tallinn, where she first established and led a policy planning staff, and later became Political Director. From 2000 to 2004, she served as the Estonian Ambassador to Germany. In 2004, she returned to the MFA in Tallinn as Undersecretary for EU Affairs and joined the EU Council Secretariat in Brussels in the following year. She has published widely on Baltic and broader European security issues. Kionka is married, has two children, and plays the trumpet for fun.

Ambassador **Matjaž Kovačič**, born on 12 September 1950, is currently Head of Division for International Organisations and Human Security. He graduated from the Faculty of Sociology, Political Science and Journalism, University of Ljubljana, in 1977. He served as Ambassador of the Republic of Slovenia to Portugal and Morocco, and later became National Coordinator for the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and for the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) in 2002.

Bernardo Monzani is currently working as Acting Representative, Policy and Programmes, for the Search for Common Ground European Office. Mr Monzani's entire professional career has developed in the field of peacebuilding. He has worked for a number of international NGOs as well as the UN in Afghanistan, Georgia, Haiti and Liberia.

Jennifer Moorehead is Advocacy and Policy Manager with the Save the Children UK in the occupied Palestinian territory. She has worked in the humanitarian and development assistance fields for the past 8 years, with a previous 10-year experience in advocating for human rights and social justice issues, with particular focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. She has concentrated her efforts within the Save the Children on the rights and protection issues facing children affected by armed conflict, supporting the establishment of a 1612 Working Group (based on the Monitoring and Reporting mechanism mandated by Security Council Resolution 1612). She lives in Bethlehem with her husband and two daughters.

Martin Nagler is Europe Outreach Officer of the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. He represents the Coalition and its work in the European Union and European governments and maintains and develops productive working relationships with other regional or national organisations. Martin carries out direct advocacy against the use of child soldiers and assists National Coalitions both in Europe and in the field. He previously worked for the Human Rights Watch in Brussels and the Amnesty International in Berlin, where he carried out advocacy and research on children affected by armed conflict, including other related issues. Martin holds a Master of Arts in History and Political Science from the University of Munich, Germany (2001), and the interdisciplinary European master's degree in Human Rights and Democratization (2004).

A Dutch lawyer, **Dick Oosting** has worked since the 70s on human rights and related issues. From 1973, he ran Amnesty International's first major campaign against torture that marked its breakthrough as a campaigning organization. Mr Oosting then served five years as Amnesty's Deputy Secretary General and in 1982, he returned to the Netherlands to head its Dutch Section. From 1987, Mr Oosting worked for the Dutch government as director of a child protection agency. In 1995, he moved back to the NGO sector to head the Dutch Refugee Council at a time, when asylum had become a highly charged political issue. In 1999, he returned to the Amnesty International as Director of its EU Office. Early in 2008, Mr Oosting joined the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) as Europe Director to lead the ICTJ's country programmes in the wider European region and represent the Organization, especially in the EU.

Anne Palm currently works as Secretary General of the Civil Society Conflict Prevention Network (KATU) in Finland, which is a member organisation of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO). Prior to this work, Ms Palm has worked as a diplomat and was engaged in the Finnish politics. She holds a master's degree in International Politics from the University of Helsinki and is specialised in security policy.

Ana Cutter Patel is Deputy Director of the International Policymakers Unit, ICTJ. She creates educational and advocacy opportunities to share the Center's work with decision-makers in the government, the United Nations, as well as other international and regional organizations. She is also the ICTJ's liaison to the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and project manager for the Center's two-year research initiative on Transitional Justice and DDR in post-conflict societies. Ana is a Fellow and Adjunct Professor at the Center for International Conflict Resolution (CICR) of the Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. She has 15 years of experience in international development. Ana holds a master's degree in International Affairs from the School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University.

Vera Remškar holds a university degree in the English Language and Literature. For most of her career, she has been involved in international business projects focused predominantly on regional development strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Since January 2007, she has held the position of Executive Director of the Foundation "TOGETHER"- Regional Center for the Psychosocial Well-being of Children. Over the past year, she has managed and coordinated several projects in the Balkans, organized a roundtable conference entitled "Identification and Improvement of the Position of Children and Women in Armed Conflict and Post-conflict Countries", and contributed to research work, notably on suicide prevention amongst young people in Kosovo and the ECDPM study "Enhancing the EU Response to Children Affected by Armed Conflict" for the Slovenian EU Presidency.

Alessandro Rossi is European Coordinator of Nonviolent Peaceforce, an NGO supporting and protecting local peaceful groups in conflict areas through unarmed peacekeeping by multinational professional peace teams on the ground. He is member of the Steering Committee of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), the platform of peacebuilding NGOs in Europe. He used to direct the Italy-based Centro Studi Difesa Civile (Centre for Civilian Defence Studies). He has followed European debates on peacebuilding since the beginning of the 90s.

Dubravka Šekoranja, born on 8 April 1960, has been Deputy Head of the Division for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance of the Slovenian MFA since March 2007. Before being appointed to her current position, she was Head of the Western and Northern Europe Section of the Division for Relations with the Countries of Western, Northern and Central Europe. She was a Counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia to Belgium and Luxemburg in Brussels between 1997 and 2001. She holds a degree in law.

Ambassador **Matjaž Šinkovec**, currently serving as State Secretary at the Office of the Slovenian Prime Minister, started his career as journalist and freelance translator and then held several positions in the area of international relations. He was actively involved in the process of Slovenia's gaining independence in the late 80s and early 90s. From 1990 to 1992, he was Member of Parliament (SDS), Parliamentary group leader, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in Slovenia. He served as Ambassador to the Court of St. James's (1992-1997), to Ireland (1996-1997), as Ambassador and Head of the Permanent Mission to NATO (1999-2004), and as Ambassador and Head of the Permanent Mission to WEU (1999-2006). From 2004 to 2006, Mr Šinkovec served as Permanent Representative to the North Atlantic Council. From 2006 to 2007, he was Director of the Slovenian Intelligence and Security Agency. Since September 2007, he is State Secretary at the Office of the Prime Minister, and in January 2008, he was appointed Political Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr Sinkovec is married to Magdalena and has two sons, Boštjan and Aleš.

Aino-Livia Stella is a civil servant working at the EC. Since 1996, she has engaged in research and development cooperation for Mediterranean countries. After this, she has been at DG Enlargement with the Romania team dealing with Romania's EU accession. She is currently working at DG ECHO A1 (Humanitarian Aid), where she has been dealing with West Africa and lately with Darfur, Sudan. During these years, she has also worked on projects managed by the Italian Minister for International Trade and for Italian Regional Structural funds for southern regions.

Jasminka Tadić Husanović, currently Director of UHD "Prijateljice", has done human resources management of 60 staff, raised funds for three different programmes, engaged in organizational promotion at the local and international levels, carried out administrative works on different projects, managed a budget of approximately EUR 350,000 a year, networked at the local and international levels, reported to the state and donors, implemented different projects, ensured cooperation with the authorities. She has extensive experience in lobbying and advocacy at the national level, taking active part in drafting various national programmes, strategic documents and similar, such as PRSP, Gender Law, cantonal and municipal budget, etc. Mrs Tadić Husanović has long years of experience in networking with both national and international NGOs, as well as governmental institutions, the capacities to coordinate and exercise a leadership in coordinating regional projects involving multi-national and cross regional staff, as well as capabilities to identify, cooperate, network, coordinate and implement activities with partners at both national and international levels.

Rashmi Thapa is a photographer, event manager, activist and development worker specialising in children in conflict in Nepal. As an Associate Coordinator of the Child Protection in Search for Common Ground, Nepal, she currently manages the Radio for Reconciliation: Children's Voices project, working with children from varied backgrounds. She has also been working as a freelance photographer for various magazines and newspapers in Nepal, her work was exhibited at the Manchester City Council, Photo Fest in August 2006. She has been working in the field of development, setting up her own independent projects since 1999. She has also worked on the Congo-Uganda Border as a UNESCO exchangee/Conflict analyst for a year. She holds a degree in Business Management from the Manchester Metropolitan University, UK, and has previously also worked in an Environmental Company assessing the impact of asbestos in the UK. In addition, she has received a United Nation recognition for the year 2006-2007 for her work in Uganda.

Katri Johanna Tukiainen, born on 23 April 1969 in Tampere, Finland, of Finnish nationality, has served as the first Human Rights/Child Protection (Children Affected by Armed Conflict) Expert for EUPOL RD Congo and for Congo-based EUSEC RD in Kinshasa since July 2007. Before that, she served as a European Union Attaché at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Africa and Middle East Department, Helsinki, between 2005 and 2007, and as Child Protection Officer at the UNICEF Cameroon Country Office (2001-2003, Yaoundé). She gained NGO working experience in Kosovo (2000-2001) and Peru (1999). Ms Tukiainen received her *Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies* from Paris III – Sorbonne Nouvelle University in 1997, her *Maitrise en Relations Internationales* from Paris I – Panthéon Sorbonne University in 1996, and her *Maitrise en Relations Franco-Allemandes* from Paris III – Sorbonne Nouvelle University in 1996.

Thomas Unger is Program Associate for the Prosecutions Programme of the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) in Brussels. He received his law degree from the University of Vienna, School of Law, and his LLM from New York University School of Law. He also received a European master's degree in Human Rights and Democratization from the University of Padua. Mr Unger has extensive experience in international criminal and human rights law. He was a law clerk at the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague and clerked with an investigatory judge at the Viennese Provincial Criminal Court. He also worked as a Human Rights Officer within the Department of Human Rights at the Austrian Foreign Ministry. Mr Unger has also been employed as a Legal System Monitor in Kosovo with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

Sylvain Vité obtained his doctoral degree in law from the University of Geneva. Currently, he is Legal Adviser at the International Committee of the Red Cross. His activities also include serving as ICRC Delegate in Colombia and as Senior Researcher and Lecturer at the University Centre for International Humanitarian Law (Geneva). He was also in charge of coordinating the elaboration of the draft UN Guidelines for the Protection and Alternative Care of Children without Parental Care.

Bukeni Waruzi is Program Coordinator for Africa and the Middle East for WITNESS, a human rights NGO based in New York. WITNESS uses video and online technologies to reveal human rights violations around the world. Before joining WITNESS, Waruzi was founder and Executive Director of Ajedi-Ka/Child Soldiers Project, through which he produced films on child soldiers and HIV/AIDS in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Davide Zaru works at the Human Rights and Democratization Unit, Directorate-General for External Relations of the European Commission; he is a PhD candidate in international law at the University of Padua (Italy) and has collaborated for two years with the Human Rights Centre of the same University. In Geneva, he worked as a trainee with the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples (LIDLIP), the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Holy See and San Marino; he later participated in several UN human rights conferences in the capacity of human rights expert with the Italian Delegation.

Mihela Zupančič was appointed Head of the EC Representation in Slovenia in September 2005. Previously, she was acting editor-in-chief at the European affairs desk. Before that, from 1993 to 1997, she was a journalist at the foreign affairs desk and after that (from 1997 to 2001) she worked as a correspondent reporting from Brussels. She holds a BA in English and Journalism, awarded by the University of Ljubljana, and an MA in International Relations, which she received after graduating from the *Université Libre de Bruxelles, Centre d'Études des Relations Internationales et Stratégiques* in Brussels. Prior to her appointment as Head of Representation of the EC in Slovenia, she worked for the Slovenian Press Agency since the early 1990s, initially as a journalist at the central news desk.

Conference Programme

Thursday, 17 April 2008	
9.00	Transfer from Hotel Mons to conference venue
9.30-10.30	<i>Registration and welcome coffee</i> (Dining Hall, Ground Floor & Cellar)
10.30-11.15	<p>Welcome (Auditorium) Matjaž Šinkovec, <i>Slovenian Presidency, State Secretary</i></p> <p>Mihela Zupančič, <i>European Commission, Head of the Representation in Slovenia</i></p> <p>Anne Palm, <i>KATU, Representative of EPLO</i></p>
	<p><u>Chair:</u> Andreja Dolničar Jeraj <i>Host, Centre for European Perspective</i></p>
11.15–11.45	<p>Regional Perspective – Lessons Learned from South-Eastern Europe (Auditorium) Jovan Divjak, <i>Education Builds Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)</i></p>
11.45–12.00	<i>Group photo</i> (Atrium)
12.00–13.30	<p>1st Plenary Session Implementation – Coherence – Cooperation: How Can We Move Forward for More Impact on Children (in the form of dialogue) (Auditorium)</p> <p>Hadewych Hazelzet, <i>EU Member State Representative, German Foreign Office, ESDP Department</i></p> <p>Davide Zaru, <i>European Commission, DG RELEX, Human Rights and Democratization Unit</i></p> <p>Martin Nagler, <i>Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers</i></p> <p>Sylvie Fouet, <i>UNICEF Brussels</i></p>
	<p><u>Chair:</u> Peter Grk, <i>Permanent Representation of the Republic of the Slovenia to the EU, Slovenian Presidency</i></p>
13.30–15.00	<i>Buffet lunch</i> (Auditorium)
15.00–18.30	<p>Parallel Discussion Groups – Working Groups A, B, C, D</p> <p>Working Group A – Prevention of Grave Violations of Children's Rights in Armed Conflicts or Activities Targeting Children Directly Involved in Hostilities (Auditorium)</p> <p>Working Group B – Participation of Children – Activities Targeting Children Indirectly Affected by Armed Conflict (Knight Hall)</p> <p>Working Group C – Post-Conflict – Redress, Transitional Justice, Impunity (Lichtenber Hall)</p> <p>Working Group D – EU's Response to Children Affected by Armed Conflict (Count Hall)</p>
18.30	Transfer from Jable Castle to Hotel Mons
20.00	<p>Official dinner (Hotel Mons, Plečnik Hall)</p> <p>Dinner speech by Dr Riina Kionka, <i>Personal Advisor to SG Solana on HR, Support to Children's Rights Mainstreaming (PMG, COHOM, CODEV, EUMC, EUSR)</i></p>

Working Group A – Prevention of Grave Violations of Children’s Rights in Armed Conflicts or Activities Targeting Children Directly Involved in Hostilities (Auditorium)

<u>Chair/Facilitator:</u>	Jane Backhurst, <i>World Vision</i>
	Ambassador Matjaž Kovačič, <i>Head of the Division for International Organizations and Human Security, Slovenian Presidency</i>
	Sophie De Coninck, <i>ILO/IPEC, DRC</i>
	Aino-Livia Stella, <i>DG ECHO, European Commission</i>
	Sylvain Vité, <i>ICRC Geneva, Legal Division</i>
<u>Reporter:</u>	Anje Jooya-Kruiter, <i>European Centre for Development Policy Management (Brussels)</i>

Working Group B – Participation of Children – Activities Targeting Children Indirectly Affected by Armed Conflict (Knight Hall)

<u>Chair/Facilitator:</u>	Bernardo Monzani, <i>Search for Common Ground</i>
	Dubravka Šekoranja, <i>Deputy Head of the Division for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance, MFA, Slovenian Presidency</i>
	Jennifer Moorehead, <i>Save UK Palestine, (Palestine)</i>
	Jasminka Tadić Husanović, <i>Prijateljice, Tuzla (BiH)</i>
<u>Reporter:</u>	Davide Zaru, <i>Human Rights and Democratization Unit, DG RELEX, European Commission</i>

Working Group C – Post-Conflict – Redress, Transitional Justice, Impunity (Lichtenberg Hall)

<u>Chair/Facilitator:</u>	Dick Oosting, <i>ICTJ (Brussels)</i>
	Ana Patel, <i>ICTJ (NY)</i>
	Anne Grandjean, <i>Justice for Children Section, UNICEF (HQ NY)</i>
	Inger Buxton, <i>Crisis Management Unit, DG RELEX, European Commission</i>
	Amady Ba, <i>Head of the Cooperation Section of the Jurisdiction, Complementarity and Cooperation, Division of the Office of the Prosecutor, International Criminal Court</i>
<u>Reporter:</u>	Thomas Unger, <i>ICTJ (Brussels)</i>

Working Group D – EU’s Response to Children Affected by Armed Conflict: the Cases of DRC and Chad (Count’s Hall)

<u>Chair/Facilitator:</u>	Philippe Bartholme, <i>EPLO</i>
	Rebecca Besant, <i>Africa Programme Associate, SFCG (Liberia)</i>
	Katri Tukiainen, <i>EUPOL RD Congo /EUSEC RD Congo HR/CAAC Expert</i>
	Thierry Baud, <i>Council Secretariat, Planning Unit CPPC</i>
	LtCol Francois-Xavier Thomas, <i>CIMIC OHQ EUFOR Chad/RCA, Military Command (Paris), Head of the CJ9</i>
<u>Reporter:</u>	Mirko Cigler, <i>Slovenian Presidency, PMG Chair</i>

Friday, 18 April 2008

8.30	Transfer from Hotel Mons to conference venue
9.30-11.30	<p>2nd Plenary Session – “Making Cooperation Work ...” (Auditorium)</p> <p>Short film and introduction by Bukeni Waruzi, <i>Congolese Activist on Child Soldiers, Program Coordinator for Africa and Middle East, WITNESS</i></p>
	<p>Statements by the Rapporteurs:</p> <p>Anje Jooya-Kruiter, <i>ECDPM</i></p> <p>Davide Zaru, <i>European Commission</i></p> <p>Thomas Unger, <i>ICTJ</i></p> <p>Mirko Cigler, <i>PMG Chair, Slovenia</i></p>
	<p><u>Chair:</u> Vera Remškar, <i>Director, "Together" Foundation (Slovenia)</i></p>
11.30	Coffee break (Dining Hall, Ground Floor & Cellar)
12.00–13.00	<p>3rd Plenary Session – Concluding remarks (Auditorium)</p> <p>Véronique Arnault, <i>Director for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, DG RELEX, European Commission</i></p> <p>Alessandro Rossi, <i>EPLO/NGO Representative, Nonviolent Peaceforce</i></p> <p>Veronica Cody <i>Council Secretariat, DG E IX Planning Unit</i></p> <p>Jacques Pellet <i>COHOM Representative, incoming French Presidency</i></p>
	<p><u>Chair:</u> Ondina Blokar, <i>Director General for Policy Planning and Multilateral Political Relations, Slovenian Presidency</i></p>
13.00–14.30	Luncheon (Dining Hall, Ground Floor & Cellar)
14.30	Transfer from Jable Castle to Hotel Mons

List of participants

	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Country
1	Abi Allam	Fadi	Permanent Peace Movement	Lebanon
2	Abu Al-Zulof	George	Defence for Children International	Palestine
3	Agotha	A.W.P.	Royal Netherlands Embassy Ljubljana	Netherlands
4	Alagić	Amra	Centar za prava djeteta Konjic	BiH
5	Arnault	Veronique	European Commission	Belgium
6	Azar	Rita	Plan International	Belgium
7	Ba	Amady	International Criminal Court	Netherlands
8	Backhurst	Jane	World Vision	Belgium
9	Bartholme	Philippe	EPLO	Belgium
10	Bašič	Amir	Musicians without Borders BiH	BiH
11	Baud	Thierry	Council Secretariat	Belgium
12	Bélanger	Alexis	SFCG HQ	USA
13	Besant	Rebecca	SFCG Liberia	USA
14	Boone	Laura	IRC UK	Belgium
15	Brillenburg Wurth	Dee	Coalition pour mettre fin à l'utilisation d'enfants soldats	Senegal
16	Bulimo	John Kidake	CAPP Kenya	Kenya
17	Burgund	Željka	FICE SRBIA	Serbia
18	Buxton	Inge	European Commission	Belgium
19	Cigler	Mirko	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
20	Cody	Veronica	Council Secretariat	Belgium
21	Cox	Tanya	Save the Children	Belgium
22	Crozon	Sébastien	EUFOR CHAD/CAR HQ	France
23	Dagand	Sophie	EPLO	Belgium
24	De Conninck	Sophie	Head of ILO/IPEC	Kinshasa (DRC)
25	de la Haye	Jos	Pax Christi International	Belgium
26	Divjak	Jovan	«Education builds BiH»	BiH
27	Dolničar Jeraj	Andreja	Centre for European Perspective	Slovenia
28	Drinič	Olgica	Our Children Zenica	BiH
29	Družić	Sena	FICE JV EVROPA	BiH
30	Duval	Sophie	Représentation permanente de la France au Comité politique et de sécurité	France
31	Eggink	Timo	Royal Netherlands Embassy in Ljubljana	Netherlands
32	Emrich	Steffen	World Vision Germany	Germany
33	Foueth	Sylvie	UNICEF	Belgium
34	France	Xavier	EUFOR CHAD/CAR HQ	France
35	Gamauf	Ursula	ASPR	Austria
36	Garb	Maja	Faculty of Social Sciences	Slovenia

	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Country
37	Gorenc	Pavlina	Senior Counsellor, MoD	Slovenia
38	Grandjean	Anne	UNICEF	USA
39	Grk	Peter	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
40	Groffen	J.C.M.	Royal Netherlands Embassy in Ljubljana	Netherlands
41	Guiguet	Xavier	MFA	France
42	Habjan	Vita	PIC	Slovenia
43	Hadziomerović	Adela	FICE Sarajevo	BiH
44	Hamzić	Berina	Naša Djeca	BiH
45	Harrington	Tim	CIVCOM	Ireland
46	Hasenson	Janina	Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Finland
47	Hazelzet	Hadewych	German Foreign Office	Germany
48	Hegener	Ute	German Platform for Civilian Crisis Management	Germany
49	Hren	Rok	MZZ	Slovenia
50	Dr Jelušič	Ljubica	Faculty of Social Sciences	Slovenia
51	Jensen	Anton	European Commission/DG DEV	Belgium
52	Jiménez	Ana Maria	Coalition Against the Involvement of Boys, Girls and Youth Into Armed Conflict in Colombia	Colombia
53	Jooya-Kruiter	Anje H.	ECDPM	Belgium
54	Kamara	Abu Bakarr Messeh	Young Leaders-Sierra Leona	UK
55	Karhu	Kaisa-Reetta	CIVCOM	Finland
56	Kionka	Riina	Personal Representative SG/HR for Human Rights	Belgium
57	Košir	Alenka	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
58	Kovač	Blaž	Amnesty Slovenia	Slovenia
59	Kovačič	Matjaž	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
60	Le Guével	Audrey	ILO	
61	Mikičič	Cassandra	HRW	Belgium
62	Monzani	Bernardo	Search for Common Ground	Belgium
63	Moorehead	Jennifer	Save UK Palestine	Palestine
64	Mushayuma	Bony	DRC Coalition	DRC
65	Nagler	Martin	Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers	Belgium
66	Nosworthy	David	DCAF	Switzerland
67	Ojala-Seppanen	Outi	European Commission	Belgium
68	Oosting	Dick	ICTJ	Belgium
69	Palm	Anne	KATU	Helsinki
70	Parkauskiene	Audrone	Office of the Personal Representative SG/HR for HR	Belgium
71	Patel	Ana	ICTJ	New York

	Last Name	First Name	Organization	Country
72	Pellet	Jacques	MFA	France
73	Pinchero	Angela	NP Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
74	Pipan	Anita	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
75	Potočnik	Miha	Povod	Slovenia
76	Purkart	Marko	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
77	Remškar	Vera	«Together» Foundation	Slovenia
78	Romen	Sheila	EPLO	Belgium
79	Rossi	Alessandro	Nonviolent Peaceforce	Belgium
80	Rush	Chris	Geneva Call	Switzerland
81	Ryan	Silverio	SEASUCS	Philippines
82	Sepp	Tanel	CIVCOM	Estonia
83	Skinner	Amy	«Together» Foundation	Slovenia
84	Somer	Jonathan	Geneva Call	Switzerland
85	Stella	Aino-Livia	European Commission/DG ECHO	Belgium
86	Šarić	Marija	Wings of Hope	BiH
87	Šekoranja	Dubrovka	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
88	Šinkovec	Matjaž	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
89	Šter	Andrej	Slovenian Presidency	Slovenia
90	Tadić Husanović	Jasminka	«Priateljice Tuzle»	BiH
91	Tager	Ana Glenda	Interpeace, Latin America Office	Guatemala
92	Thapa	Rashmi	SFCG Nepal	Nepal
93	Thomas	Francois-Xavier	EUFOR CHAD/CAR HQ	France
94	Tufekčić	Mersiha	BiH	BiH
95	Tukiainen	Katri	EUSEC/EUPOL	Belgium
96	Unger	Thomas	ICTJ	Belgium
97	Ungersboeck	Simone	Austrian Development Agency	Vienna
98	Unogwu	Felix	SFCG HQ	USA
99	Varoga	Tina	Robotrade	Slovenia
100	Vidović	Gordana	«Budučnost» Modriča	BiH
101	Vidović	Slobodan		BiH
102	Vité	Sylvain	ICRC Geneva	Suisse
103	Volčanjek Perčič	Bernarda	Captain, Slovenian Army	Slovenia
104	Vončina	Tina	European Commission Representation	Slovenia
105	Waruzi	Bukeni	WITNESS	New York
106	Zajc	Srečko	MoD	Slovenia
107	Zaru	Davide	European Commission	Belgium
108	Zorko	Marta	Forum for Security Studies	Croatia
109	Zupančič	Mihela	European Commission Representation	Slovenia

Reading list for participants of CAAC conference

- **EU Guidelines on Children & Armed Conflict 2003**,
to be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/child/caafguidelines.pdf
- **Implementation Strategy for Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict**, 25 April 2006,
to be found at:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/hr/news65.pdf
- **Checklist for the Integration of the Protection of Children affected by Armed Conflict into ESDP Operations (2006)**, 23 May 2006,
to be found at:
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/06/st09/st09767.en06.pdf>
- **Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - A special place for children in EU external action**, 6 February 2008,
to be found at:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52008DC0055:EN:NOT>
- **Commission Communication "Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child"**, 4 July 2006,
to be found at:
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2006/com2006_0367en01.pdf
- **EU Concept for support to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (2006)**, 11 December 2006,
to be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/child/concept_ddr_1206.pdf
- **Children and armed conflict related EC-funded projects in 2007**,
to be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/child/ac/project_table0607.pdf
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