



Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting

Transitioning from war to peace: What role for the EU in addressing illicit economies?

Thursday 24 October 2019, 08:30 – 17:15

Scotland House Conference Centre
Rond-Point Robert Schuman / Robert Schumanplein 6, Brussels

Concept Note

Background:

In recent years, it has become increasingly recognised that development interventions have an impact on the distribution of power in the contexts in which they are carried out. Accordingly, the success and sustainability of interventions often depend on adequately understanding and addressing the local power and economic dynamics with which they may interact. This is particularly true of the dynamics existing outside of formal and legal processes, especially in environments transitioning out of conflict. This may involve dealing with issues relating to the illegal trafficking of people, minerals and drugs, illicit flows of money, the unlawful use of natural resources, corruption, etc.

Robust conflict analysis integrating political economy dynamics has a key role to play in helping development and peace actors to understand these illicit economies and to adapt their interventions accordingly. Illicit economies are frequently assessed from the metrics of law enforcement, with the impact of actions being measured in terms of crop eradication, arrests, confiscations, or convictions. Yet this is an incomplete – and sometimes counter-productive – response, as it ignores the root causes of these dynamics and the possible needs of local populations (who may engage in illicit activities as a means for survival). This is especially the case in remote borderlands, which are often administered differently from central areas and sometimes under-served or abandoned by state institutions.

In its 2016 [Global Strategy](#), the European Union (EU) stressed the importance of addressing the ‘multiple dimensions’ of conflicts, and highlighted the value of robust analysis in doing so. This meeting will seek to help deepen the EU’s use of analysis and to enhance how the EU approaches issues relating to illicit economies and remote borderlands dynamics in its development and peace interventions. This will serve to strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of EU engagements, especially in contexts transitioning from war to peace.

Objectives:

The overall aim of this meeting will be to gather analysis and recommendations from civil society experts and academics on how the EU can better engage with the issue of illicit economies in its development and conflict prevention work.

Specifically, based on the country cases of Colombia and Myanmar, the meeting will seek to gather insights, lessons learned and recommendations for the EU on:

1. The implications of illicit economies in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, especially as they relate to governance issues in remote borderland areas.
2. How illicit economies can be better addressed so as to support more sustainable and inclusive transitions from war to peace, for the economy and for peace more broadly.

3. Understanding the gender dynamics and diverse gendered experiences of illicit economies, including how women and women-headed households are adapting and playing larger roles in transitions from war to peace.
4. How gender-sensitive conflict analysis integrating political economy dynamics is (and should be) used in practice by the EU in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

Participants:

The meeting will bring together participants from civil society (including participants from, and working in, Colombia and Myanmar) and the EU institutions (the European External Action Service and the European Commission).

Format and structure:

The meeting will take the form of a day-long round-table meeting with facilitated interactive sessions in which all participants will be encouraged to provide their analysis and recommendations. Participants may be split into small groups during the day. The discussions will take place under the Chatham House Rule.¹

The Civil Society Dialogue Network

The Civil Society Dialogue Network (CSDN) is a mechanism for dialogue between civil society and EU policy-makers on issues related to peace and conflict. It is co-financed by the European Union (Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace). It is managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), a civil society network, in co-operation with the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The third phase of the CSDN will last from 2017 to 2020. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).

¹ Participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

Agenda

08:30 – 09:00	Registration and welcome coffee
09:00 – 09:15	Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marc Fiedrich, Head of Unit, EC.FPI.2 • Daphné Barbotte, Policy Officer, EEAS.ISP.2 • Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, EPLO
09:15 – 10:30	Session 1: Unpacking illicit economies and their significance for development and peace actions <p>The aim of this session will be to enable participants to discuss the major challenges and policies relating to illicit economies, including in remote borderlands.</p> <p>Issues to be discussed may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the major issues to be taken in consideration in relation to illicit economies? • What are current policy responses and interventions (including by the EU), and what are their limitations and drawbacks? • Where and how have illicit economies been addressed within a peace process or agreement? • What are the specific challenges in addressing illicit economies in remote borderlands? <p>Facilitated by Laura Davis (EPLO)</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	Session 2: Understanding the gender dynamics of illicit economies <p>The focus of this session will be on the importance of integrating gender into any analysis and intervention relating to illicit economies.</p> <p>Issues to be discussed may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are men and women in marginalised communities affected differently by illicit economies? • How do women and women-headed households in conflict-affected contexts engage in and/or adapt in response to illicit economies? • What different roles do men and women from marginalised communities play in transitions from war to peace with regard to illicit economies? • How should gender dynamics be integrated in analysis and in policy responses to illicit economies? <p>Facilitated by Laura Davis (EPLO)</p>
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break

13:30 – 15:15	<p>Session 3: The implications of illicit economies, including in relation to governance in remote borderlands</p> <p>The aim of this session will be to enable participants to discuss the challenges faced by communities engaging in illicit economies, especially in remote borderlands, and the linkages between illicit economies and issues of governance.</p> <p>Issues to be discussed may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What needs, incentives and/or interests lead marginalised communities to engage in illicit economies? • What are the peace and development challenges for communities engaging in illicit economies in remote borderlands? • How should state institutions respond in these regions? • How should donors address the needs of communities engaging in illicit economies in remote borderlands, including in relation to issues of governance in transitions from war to peace? <p>Facilitated by Laura Davis (EPLO)</p>
15:15 – 15:45	<p>Coffee break</p>
15:45 – 17:00	<p>Session 4: Recommendations for the EU on how to address illicit economies</p> <p>The aim of this session will be to provide additional recommendations on how the EU should address illicit economies as part of its development and conflict prevention efforts.</p> <p>Issues to be discussed may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should gender-sensitive conflict analysis integrating political economy dynamics be used in practice by the EU in fragile and conflict-affected contexts? • How should the EU support the enabling drivers of a sustainable transition from war economies to peace economies, including in remote borderlands? • How can the EU's development and peace actions address the limitations and drawbacks of the current responses to illicit economies? What should be maintained and/or deepened, and what should be done differently? Are there examples of good practices? <p>Facilitated by Laura Davis (EPLO)</p>
17:00 – 17:15	<p>Closing remarks</p>