



Civil Society Dialogue Network Geographic Meeting

An EU Partnership with the Gulf: Gathering Input from Civil Society

Concept Note

1 February 2022 (10:00-11:30), Online

Background

Relations between the European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries are based on the [EU-GCC Cooperation Agreement](#) from 1988. More recently, bilateral Cooperation Arrangements were signed by the European External Action Service (EEAS) with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the GCC member countries.

Recent developments in the Gulf, as well as the increasing significance of the Gulf region for the EU, *inter alia* in terms of Global Agenda priorities such as the green transition, climate change and digitalisation, brought the EU to explore ways to enhance dialogue and cooperation with the region.

As the EEAS and the European Commission (EC) services are in the process of preparing a Joint Communication on the Gulf, this meeting will contribute informally to discussions on the EU-Gulf cooperation by bringing together civil society experts to share their analysis and provide ideas and recommendations on the EU's engagement in the region.

Objectives

The overall objectives of this meeting are for participants to discuss EU-Gulf cooperation and provide recommendations to the EU on how and in which areas it can enhance its engagement in the region.

Format

The meeting will last for a maximum of 90 minutes and will take the form of a facilitated online round-table discussion under the Chatham House Rule.¹ It will be held via the online platform Zoom.

Participants

The meeting will bring together approximately 20 participants, including international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) representatives and other experts, and officials from both the EC services and the EEAS.

Outcome

To allow for open and confidential discussions at the meeting, no public report will be prepared.

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 (see: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/chatham-house-rule>).

Agenda

10:00 – 10:15	Introductory Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carl Hallergard, Deputy Managing Director, Middle East and North Africa, European External Action Service (EEAS) • Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)
10:15 – 11:20	Exchange of views and recommendations on future EU-Gulf cooperation <p>Participants will be invited to provide insights on the EU's role in the Gulf region and recommendations for future ways to enhance its engagement and cooperation.</p> <p>Issues to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace and security issues in the region (i.e., confidence building measures; counter-terrorism (CT) and prevention/countering of violent extremism (P/CVE); maritime security; civil protection and disaster preparedness; cooperation through the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach; regional security; role of the EU in fostering regional integration) • Climate and energy (i.e., green transition; renewable energy production and trade; environmental protection; climate financing; triangular cooperation; role of business and private sector) • Socio-economic issues (i.e., support to social development in the region; culture; education; research and innovation) <p><i>Moderator: Laura Davis, EPLO</i></p>
11:20 – 11:30	Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEAS • EPLO

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 fourth phase of the CSDN will last from 2020 to 2023. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).