**EPLO Working Group Call Funding for Peacebuilding**

 **30 June 2025**

**Participants:** Amelie Gatjen (Berghof Foundation), Gordon Shannon and Robert Scharf (Christian Aid Ireland), Leah Mitchell (CIVIC), Malte Peters (Conciliation Resources), Jasper Peet-Martel (Conducive Space for Peace), Maud-Angie Spirlet (European Institute of Peace), Iulia Socea and Sabrina Saoudi (Geneva Call), Chris Rotas (HD Centre), Aisling Schorderet (Independent Diplomat), Santa Falasca (International Center for Transitional Justice), Ninon Paulissen (International Crisis Group), Leonard Fried (Interpeace), Helene Kuperman (Mines Advisory Group), Alice Bono (Near East Foundation Belgium), Anna Penfrat (Nonviolent Peaceforce), Søren Tuxen Faber (Oxfam Denmark), Terri Beswick (PAX), Teresa De Vivo (Pax Christi International), Kloe Tricot O’Farrell (Peace Direct), Jennifer Menninger (Platform ZKB), Andrew de Sousa (Quaker Council for European Affairs), Emily Brewster (Saferworld), Hilde Deman (Search for Common Ground), Sophie Campbell White (Transparency International), Lisa Nowag (World Vision EU)

1. **Updates on the next MFF**

*Presentation by Aurelie.*

Geneva Call: what presented now by EPLO was confirmed by ECHO interlocutors during the VOICE General Assembly.

Peace Direct: On Denmark – are we planning anything with them? Far right in the DEVE committee – what are we doing regarding that?

 *Aurelie: Mention to the (failed) DEVE report in her answer about the Parliament (EPP and Renew engagement).*

Christian Aid Ireland: concerns about the amount of flexibility of the instruments and its operationalization (including funding allocation) – impact of Global Gateway. Flex the ability to use the funds in different ways. Suggestion to strengthen the collaboration with other networks and to strengthen the advocacy at capital level (there are already working groups working with the Irish for their Presidency).

Add link to Court of Auditors statement.

1. **Discussion on how to update EPLO's MFF Statement**

*Updates from Derve/Aurelie.*

Topline reaction/response on 16th July.

Later in the summer/September there will be a proper update of the EPLO statement, which will focus specifically on the regulation.

Peace Direct: yes to being constructive, but we should not cave in. We should be clear and serious about our stance and approach vis a vis hard security/militarization – we need tools to support our conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts.

Oxfam: the Danish PM said that they are not going to be a neutral broker during the Presidency – she is strong within the EU and has a very cooperative national Parliament (for the moment). She will try to drive home her policy goals, which are strongly focused on hard national security (vis a vis Russia). The mixing up of values/altruistic goals/development aid is not going away. We need arguments that strengthen the idea of funding for peace serving European security in the longer term. The other priority for the Danish Presidency is curving migration, especially from Africa and MENA.

1. **Upcoming statement of the coalition of CSOs working on external action in the next MFF**

*Update from Derve on coalition.*

1. **Updates on national budgets for conflict prevention and peacebuilding**

PZKB on Germany: last week the draft budget for 2025 was adopted. Next month the government will be negotiating the one for 2026 (probably even lower, especially if more funds will be allocated to NATO). On the budget for the GFO – 3 billion euros and reallocations – for peace and stability the budget will decrease. For the UN there is a slight increase. Cuts in humanitarian aid and crisis prevention. PZKB published a press release on this last week (+ VENRO).

Search for Common Ground on Belgium: a lot of negotiations going on, the MFA confirmed that there will be a 25% cut for the next ODA funding cycle – not sure whether that percentage will be divided (Enabel, multilateral, CSOs). Some changes will also impact the geographic priorities. On the civic space fund (before stand alone instrument), it might get channelled by the thematic priorities of the funding cycle. Belgium to withdraw from Central Sahel region. The MFA is negotiating with the civil society representatives (as a labour union).

1. **AOB**

Nonviolent Peaceforce: MFF Hub statement – is there much on preserving staff in delegations? Mention to the Politico leak on closing down of EUDELs. Could this point be added to future EPLO advocacy efforts? Maybe the administration budget line is something tangible that the Parliament could have an easy win on.

CA Ireland: we should have it under the radar – localisation matters. The tendency right now is that not only EUDELs, but also Embassies, are retracting from fragile/conflict affected countries. We need to focus on how to ensure that there is an active engagement in those countries, especially in view of (lack of) investments in the framework of the Global Gateway. Funding calls (coming from EUDELs) will also drop for country programs, especially in the transition process.

Search for Common Ground: need for a better coordination between EUDELs and Member States, since we are seeing Embassies closing down in the same places. We don’t see any conversation happening between EUDELs and MS MFAs. Member States which are closing Embassies are calling for the EU to remain present in those countries, but we don’t see any coordination happening there.

Independent Diplomat: the risk of ceding space to other actors works well as a (missed completely)

Nonviolent Peaceforce: (missed completely) + updates on the fragility strategy

Geneva Call (via chat): ECHO speaker at the VOICE General Assembly spoke about fragility and said that there will be an upcoming Commission communication on this but no specific details were given

Search for Common Ground: the strategy on fragility is delayed, it was supposed to be in the 2025 programme, but is not. EEAS not much involved in this and probably not a lot of funding attached to it, outside of the humanitarian.