



## Civil Society Dialogue Network Member State Meeting in Finland

### Conflict Prevention and the European Union

Monday, 7 February 2011

#### Representation of the European Commission, Helsinki

The first Member State meeting of the Civil Society Dialogue Network took place in Helsinki on Monday, 7 February 2011 and was entitled Conflict Prevention and the European Union. The overall objectives of the meeting were to analyse the state of play regarding the establishment of the EEAS, to identify opportunities and obstacles for the Service to prevent conflict and build peace and to discuss possibilities for Finnish foreign policy expertise in the field of civilian crisis management and mediation to be incorporated into EU foreign policy.

The meeting began with a set of opening remarks. Ms Catherine Woollard, Executive Director of EPLO introduced EPLO and the Civil Society Dialogue Network and stressed the appropriateness of having the first CSDN Member State meeting in Finland, which is a strong supporter for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Ms Tuija Talvitie, Executive Director of CMI, welcomed speakers and participants on behalf of CMI and KATU, the two Finnish member organisations of EPLO who organised the meeting, and underlined the meeting's focus on dialogue. Mr. Eikka Kosonen, Head of the European Union Representation in Finland, welcomed participants to the Representation and sketched the developments in EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) since the accession of Finland in 1995. Since Mr. Erkki Tuomioja, Chair of the Grand Committee in the Finnish Parliament and former Minister for Foreign Affairs, was unable to join the meeting his speech which discussed the EU's capacity to respond to conflict was read out.

The first panel discussed the state of play regarding the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) and conflict prevention and was chaired by Ms Catherine Woollard, EPLO Executive Director. Mr. Andrew Byrne, Conflict Prevention and Security Policy, EEAS, summarised the EU's approach to conflict prevention and explained current developments relating to addressing the thematic areas of peacebuilding, conflict prevention and mediation within the Service. Ms Heidi Hautala, MEP and Chair of Human Rights Sub-committee, Greens/EFA group, provided her evaluation of the setting-up of the EEAS and outlined the challenges that still lie ahead. Ms Heli Siivola, Adviser for Security and Development, Unit for Security Policy and Crisis Management at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, discussed key indicators that should be used to measure the success of the EEAS. The panel was followed by a facilitated discussion.

The second panel focused on civilian crisis management as an EU peacebuilding tool and was chaired by Ms Oili Alm, Secretary General of KATU. Mr. Antti Häikiö, National Coordinator of training and civilian crisis management at the Finnish Ministry of the Interior, summarised Finland's policy framework regarding civilian crisis management and highlighted challenges to implementation. Ms Kati Leinonen, Human Rights Policy Officer, Directorate for Human Rights and Democracy, EEAS, congratulated Finland for its proactive stance in advancing civilian crisis management at EU level and provided an overview of the EU's efforts in strengthening gender and human rights in Common Security and Defence

Policy (CSDP). Ms. Terhi Nieminen-Mäkynen, KATU Vice-Chair and KATU representative in the national advisory board to monitor the implementation of the national civilian crisis management strategy, talked about the institutional structure that Finland set-up to monitor the implementation of the national civilian crisis management strategy and drew lessons for the EU in this regard. The panel was followed by a facilitated discussion.

The third panel was on the potential and challenges for the EU to act as a global mediator and was chaired by Ms Kirsi Joenpolvi, Head Africa Programme at CMI. Mr Andrew Byrne, Conflict Prevention and Security Policy, EEAS, summarised the EU's activities in the field of mediation and its potential to develop further mediation capacity. Ms Heli Kanerva, Special Representative for Mediation and UN Resolution 1325 at the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, outlined the Finnish policy framework regarding mediation as well as possibilities to increase the EU's role as peace mediator. Ms Tuija Talvitie, Executive Director of CMI stressed the importance of multilevel mediation and put forward several recommendations for the EU regarding its role as mediator. The panel was followed by a facilitated discussion.

Ms Oili Alm, KATU Vice-Chair, made concluding remarks which ended the meeting.