



Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting

The 2015 UN Reviews: Civil Society Perspectives on EU Implementation

Monday 1 February 2016 (13:00 – 17:00)

Scotland House Conference Centre

Rond-point Robert Schuman / Robert Schumanplein 6, 1040 Brussels

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) initiated high-level reviews of its peace operations, peacebuilding architecture and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. In this context, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) organised CSDN dialogue meetings to gather practitioners' input on the [UN Peace Operations review and the role of the EU](#), in January 2015, and to discuss the [EU and civil society's perspectives on the review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture \(UNPBA\)](#), in April 2015.

While these reviews are distinct from each other, they are all motivated by the need to ensure maximum coherence of UN actions. Drawing synergies from the different reviews is essential for effective, well-coordinated and complimentary peacebuilding efforts throughout the UN system.

The three reports suggest that the UN puts more emphasis on addressing root causes of vulnerability and crisis, through political solutions to underlying drivers of conflict as well as through structured investment in prevention and early warning. They recommend that efforts to strengthen the UN's conflict prevention capacities go beyond the UN system, engaging civil society, local communities, religious leaders, the private sector, youth and women's groups. Advancing the Women, Peace and Security agenda is a common theme across the three reviews. The reviews further acknowledge the importance of working in close coordination and partnership with regional and sub-regional organisations, and the European Union (EU) is highlighted as an important strategic partner of the UN in terms of rapid response and crisis management co-operation, as well as with regard to long-term peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities.

The High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations (HIPPO) recommends strengthening the UN-EU partnership at policy, institutional and operational levels to identify and mobilise innovative approaches and capacities for preventing emerging conflicts and for developing a reliable system of fast-responding regional capabilities based on stand-by arrangements. The UNPBA review recommends that the UN better defines the scope, content and rules that frame its partnerships with the EU, including by making better use of the EU's comprehensive approach and by exploring ways to secure more predictable joint funding for peacebuilding. All three reviews stress that UN must engage with its partners, including the EU, to ensure coherent mechanisms that support gender mainstreaming and women's full participation and leadership in peace and security.

Objective

The overall objective of this meeting is to enable representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs) to discuss the common themes in all three reviews and, acknowledging the clear recognition of partnerships, provide input as to the role of the EU and its Member States in the implementation phase.

Format

The meeting will consist of two sessions aimed at discussing the interlinkages between the reviews and at identifying their concrete implications (i) for a strengthened UN-EU partnership on conflict prevention and (ii) for improved UN-EU strategic co-operation on crisis management. The implications of the High-Level Review of the implementation of UNSCR 1325 will inform both discussions. In each session, initial presentations from speakers will be followed by an open exchange in which all participants will be encouraged to engage.

Participants

The meeting will bring together around 30 participants, including EU policy-makers, UN officials and representatives from civil society peacebuilding organisations. Other interested parties, including EU Member States officials and representatives from think tanks, academia, the private sector, etc. will also be invited to participate.

Outcome

The outcome of this meeting will be a set of civil society recommendations to be fed into the broader consultative process encouraged by the Office of the President of the UN General Assembly (OPGA) in preparation of the High-Level Thematic Debate of the UN General Assembly on 'Strengthening the UN's Role in Peace and Security', which will take place on 10-11 May 2016, in New York.

AGENDA

12:00 – 13:00	Registration and lunch
13:00 – 13:15	Welcome/Introductory remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) • Office of the President of the UN General Assembly (OPGA) • European External Action Service (EEAS)
13:15 – 15:00	Session 1: Options for a strengthened UN-EU partnership on conflict prevention: what role for the EU and civil society? Possible questions for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How aligned are UN and EU approaches to conflict prevention? How can they be more inclusive of women and youth, and focus more on the search for political settlements and sustainable peace? • How can the EU use its foreign policy tools and leverage to support UN engagement in preventing conflict and in sustaining peace? • How can civil society be meaningfully engaged in the various phases of UN and EU conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts? • How can the UN and the EU jointly support the development of new funding models for more sustainable peacebuilding in specific thematic and geographical areas? <p><i>Presentations by CSO representatives. Comments by EU and UN officials. Followed by a facilitated discussion.</i></p>
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 – 16:55	Session 2: Improving UN-EU strategic cooperation on crisis management Possible questions for discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can inter-institutional co-operation in the planning and conduct of EU support to UN peace operations be improved? What lessons can be learned from past engagements? • How can the UN-EU support to the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) be further strengthened? • What can civil society do to ensure more inclusive and regular dialogue, build local ownership and foster better understanding of local contexts by UN and EU actors in conflict-affected countries? • How can gender mainstreaming in peace operations be improved? <p><i>Presentations by CSO representatives. Comments by EU and UN officials. Followed by a facilitated discussion.</i></p>
16:55 – 17:00	Concluding remarks

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 for Stability). 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 second phase of the CSDN will last from 2014 to 2016. For more information, please visit the [EPLO website](#).