



## Civil Society Dialogue Network Policy Meeting

# Twenty years after the Gothenburg Programme on Conflict Prevention

## What next for the EU as a Global Peace Actor?

Friday 17 September 2021 (9:15-12:30)

NH Berlaymont (Boulevard Charlemagne - Karel de Grotelaan, 11-19 Brussels) and online (Zoom)

### Background

In June 2001, the European Council adopted the [EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts](#); also known as the 'Gothenburg Programme'<sup>1</sup>. This first formal commitment for conflict prevention was an important milestone, which shaped the development of EU external action.

Twenty years on, the EU has considerably enhanced its toolbox and practices, with the development of new policies, guidance tools and training for conflict analysis and early warning as well as with the creation of dedicated structures to support conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The new [Concept on EU Peace Mediation](#), the establishment of a Pool of Mediators and the more systematic engagement of the EU in conflict analysis are recent illustrations of such progress.

Several challenges remain however: translating conflict analysis and early warning into action; working in an integrated and strategic manner across the institutions and with the Member States; or better assessing the impact of EU action on conflict dynamics and adapting interventions accordingly in volatile situations.

This anniversary provides an opportunity to reflect on the EU's engagement for conflict prevention in specific countries, to identify operational challenges that remain, and to set the course for the next twenty years of EU external action.

### Objectives

The overall objective of the meeting is to provide space for an informal exchange on the EU's capacity as a global peace actor between a small group of Ambassadors to the Political and Security Committee, Members of the European Parliament, senior EU officials and the top leadership of established peacebuilding civil society organisations.

The specific objectives are to:

- Take stock of the EU's strengths and good practices in responding to conflict in the short and in the longer term
- Identify key trends in conflicts and armed violence and their implications for the EU
- Gather recommendations to improve the impact of the EU as a global actor for peace

**Format:** The meeting will be held in a hybrid format with some participants joining in person in Brussels and others joining via the online platform Zoom. The discussion will take place under the confidentiality rule of Chatham House. Participation will be by invitation only.

**Outcome:** A public report summarising the key findings and recommendations will be distributed following the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Which *inter alia* welcomed the European Commission's [Communication on Conflict Prevention \(April 2001\)](#)

## Agenda

09:15 – 09:30	<p><b>Welcome and opening remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charles Fries, Deputy-Secretary General for Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and crisis response, European External Action Service (EEAS) (TBC)</li> <li>• Hilde Hardeman, Director, Head of Service, Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI), European Commission</li> <li>• Jonathan Cohen, Executive Director, Conciliation Resources, and Chair of the Steering Committee of the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO)</li> </ul>
09:30 – 10:45	<p><b>Session 1: Translating conflict analysis into EU action: lessons from specific countries and regions</b></p> <p>The EU institutions, the Member States and civil society organisations have considerably increased their conflict analysis capabilities in the past years. Yet it remains challenging to translate this analysis into appropriate responses in highly volatile contexts – sometimes because of political pressure to act rapidly and visibly in a given crisis, or on the contrary because the situation does not seem to require immediate attention and resources. Building on their personal experiences in specific countries, participants will share lessons and good practices on using conflict analyses to design, implement and adapt conflict-sensitive EU actions aimed at increasing human security.</p> <p>Issues to be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What lessons can be drawn from using conflict analysis to design, implement and adapt EU conflict prevention and crisis management responses?</li> <li>• What are the remaining obstacles for the EU to translate conflict analysis into appropriate action?</li> <li>• How can civil society support the EU in better translating conflict analysis into appropriate action?</li> </ul> <p>Kick-off speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambassador Lindvall, Swedish Ambassador to the Political and Security Committee</li> <li>• Hilde Hardeman, Director, Head of FPI, European Commission</li> <li>• Isabelle Arradon, Director of Research, International Crisis Group (ICG)</li> <li>• Andrew Sherriff, Head of the European External Affairs Programme, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)</li> </ul> <p>Moderated by Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, EPLO</p>
10:45 – 11:00	<p><b>Coffee break</b></p>

11:00 – 12:15	<p><b>Session 2: Looking towards the next decade for the EU and conflict prevention</b></p> <p>In 2016 the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign And Security Policy was already addressing a 'more connected, contested and complex world.' The challenges identified then, including climate change, hybrid threats, inequality and the need to reform global governance, remain critical. The Covid-19 pandemic, growing geopolitical tensions and increasing polarization outside and inside Europe could make the EU's commitment to prevent violent conflict even harder to achieve. This session will be dedicated to upcoming challenges and opportunities for the EU's peacebuilding efforts in the coming decade, looking in particular at the added value and self-perception of the EU in comparison to other actors.</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there new conflict dynamics/trends to be taken into account? And if so, how?</li> <li>• What are the comparative advantages of the EU as a global actor and how could they evolve?</li> <li>• How to ensure that peacebuilding approaches receive adequate political attention and are used more systematically by the EU to respond to conflicts and crises in the future?</li> </ul> <p>Kick-off speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pawel Herczyński, Managing Director, Directorate for CSDP and Crisis Response, European External Action Service (EEAS)</li> <li>• Alviina Alametsä, Member of the European Parliament</li> <li>• Janne Taalas, Chief Executive Officer of the CMI – Martti Ahtisaari Peace Foundation</li> <li>• Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, EPLO</li> </ul> <p>Moderated by Santa Falasca, Head of Office Brussels &amp; The Hague, International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), and Member of the EPLO Steering Committee</p>
12:15 – 12:30	<p><b>Concluding remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sofie From-Emmesberger, Chair of the EU's Political and Security Committee</li> </ul>

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