



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 18 June 2003**

**10680/03**

**LIMITE**

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**REPORT**

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from :            Presidency  
to :               European Council

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Subject :        Implementation of the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts  
                  - Conflict prevention report

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Delegations will find attached the Presidency report on the implementation of the EU programme for the prevention of violent conflicts, as agreed at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 16 June 2003, to be submitted to the European Council.

## **REPORT**

**Subject:** Implementation of the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts

### **1. Introduction**

This report supplements the first progress report submitted to the European Council at Seville (doc. 9991/02) and covers actions taken in implementation of the EU Programme for Violent Conflicts during the period July 2002 to June 2003. Throughout this period, conflict prevention lay at the heart of EU external action, both in its regional policies and in the further development of instruments. This report reviews specific initiatives undertaken in the context of conflict prevention as well as progress in the areas of activity set out in the EU Programme.

### **2. Specific Initiatives**

A regional EU Conference on Conflict Prevention - "Partners in Prevention" - was hosted in **Helsingborg**, Sweden, on 29-30 August 2002. The Conference brought together representatives at senior political level from the EU, the UN, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and NATO to discuss how to strengthen capabilities and co-operation in order to prevent violent conflicts. This was a direct response to the call from the UN Secretary-General, in his report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict, to arrange regional workshops in order to discuss the regional dimensions of co-operation in conflict prevention. High officials from the African Union, ECOWAS and SADC also attended the Conference with the aim of stimulating increased interaction between the United Nations and other organisations with the possibility of similar such meetings in other regions. The chairman's conclusions were forwarded to the UN Secretary-General and will contribute to the next, UN-organised, high-level meeting between the UN and regional organisations in July 2003.

In implementing the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, the Greek Presidency has emphasised the regional approach and has focussed mainly on the Western Balkans with a view to improving and consolidating the mechanisms and procedures for effective conflict prevention in the region. The lessons learned in the Western Balkans have value for EU activities in other regions and could be applied to external action more generally.

In this context, the Presidency convened a seminar in **Athens** on 5 - 6 May 2003 on lessons in conflict prevention learned from the Western Balkans. The seminar built on the dialogue for closer co-operation with International Organisations, which opened in Helsingborg. It was attended by representatives of the EU Member States, acceding states, candidate countries and other potential partners, as well as by EU institutions, representatives from governments in the region, international organisations (UN, NATO, OSCE, Council of Europe) and NGOs active in the region.

The purpose of the seminar was to evaluate the role of the European Union, working with its partners to prevent further violent conflict and to draw the necessary conclusions so as to produce a more efficient engagement in the Western Balkans and beyond. The seminar reaffirmed that the prospect of European integration remains the fundamental tool for conflict resolution and conflict prevention in the Western Balkans. In this context, it reaffirmed that there should be a comprehensive and integrated approach to conflict prevention making a maximum use of tools available. It stressed the importance of combating organised crime and corruption and of the Western Balkans countries fulfilling their commitments and meeting criteria set out in the Stabilisation and Association Process. Further to this seminar, the Presidency has submitted a food for thought paper entitled "Shaping a EU strategy for conflict prevention in the Western Balkans".

As a follow-up to Helsingborg and Athens, a conference on lessons learned and best practices from the Western Balkans, aiming at producing concrete recommendation for future EU involvement, will be held in Sweden on 8 and 9 October 2003.

### 3. Political priorities for preventive actions

Work on the formulation of political priorities is underway in a number of contexts. The Council took stock of potential conflict areas at the outset of the Danish and Greek presidencies on 22 July 2002 and 27 January 2003. It tasked the Political and Security Committee (PSC) to keep a close watch on situations of concern and to make recommendations for enhanced actions as necessary.

The linkage between priorities and the allocation of resources was considered by Council on 18 March 2003 in the context of its review of the effectiveness of external action. The Council welcomed the Commission's Progress Report on the Implementation of the Common Framework for Country Strategy Papers (CSPs). The CSP process is central to the Commission strategy of mainstreaming the conflict prevention approach into all its activities.

### 4. Early warning, action and policy coherence

In its ongoing work in implementing the Programme, the Council has tasked the PSC to identify and keep a close watch on situations that could require particular attention and to make recommendations for enhanced EU action as necessary. The PSC reviews its work in this area periodically. In this context, the methodology for early warning has been developed through joint work by the **Early Warning bodies** of the Council Secretariat (Policy Unit, Joint Situation Centre and EU Military Staff) and the Commission. In support of this work, the flow of information and intelligence from Member States has been improved. Steps are being taken to ensure that account is taken of early warning reports in agenda planning. Frequent staff to staff meetings between the EU and international organisations such as the UN, OSCE and NATO contribute to gather information for early warning purposes. In early 2003, the Commission updated its country conflict assessments covering more than 120 countries. These assessments formed the basis for the Commission's contribution on early warning and provided analytical input to ensure a systematic treatment of conflict issues in Country Strategy Papers and mid-term reviews.

## 5. EU instruments for long- and short-term conflict prevention

Within the framework of **ESDP**, the **EU Police Mission (EUPM)** has been deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and **Operation Concordia** in FYROM during the period under review. Relevant developments within this framework are summarised in greater detail in the Presidency report on ESDP to the European Council. These deployments, in conjunction with intensive diplomatic engagement and the use of community instruments have made an important contribution to the prevention of further violent conflict in the region.

A conflict prevention dimension shall be included in the **EU's common training programme** within the framework of ESDP, so that this may form an integral part of the common European security culture, which is the main aim of the common training initiative.

**EU Special Representatives (EUSRs)** are currently deployed in the Western Balkans (three mandates covering Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM and the Stability Pact), the Middle East, the Great Lakes region and Afghanistan. During the period in question, **EUSR** mandates have been reviewed and amended to ensure a comprehensive and consistent framework covering reporting, direction, tasking and co-ordination. A consistent framework for the evaluation of mandates has also been put in place and guidelines on evaluation issued to all EUSRs and to Working Groups. The Special Representative of the Presidency, responsible for the Mano River countries, has also contributed to the preventive action of the Union.

An important function of **monitoring missions** may be to contribute to conflict prevention/deterrence by presence. Building on lessons learned notably from the EU Monitoring Mission in the Western Balkans (ECMM/EUMM), work has been carried out within the Council, in co-operation with the Commission, on developing a concept for the wider use of EU monitoring missions as a generic instrument for EU conflict prevention and crisis management.

To enhance the EU's capacity to react quickly, work continues within the Council on the definition of a conceptual framework/guidelines for EU **fact-finding missions**, notably through the development of check-lists of issues to be considered when setting up and conducting a fact finding mission. Furthermore, the Commission has conducted a number of strategy and programming missions in conflict areas which have included identification of possible conflict mitigation/prevention measures such as support to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes. Specific conflict prevention assessment missions were carried out in 2002 in order to examine how to bring community instruments to bear on the root causes of conflict in the South Pacific, Indonesia, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Further such missions are being planned.

Under the **EC training project on civilian crisis management**, which has taken into consideration UN and OSCE training standards, Member States training institutions' will have trained up to 250 experts by July 2003. The project encompasses a broad spectrum of mission preparation functions and tasks covering the Civilian Administration, as well as Rule of Law and Human Rights, required during the different stages of the conflict management cycle. A specific module has been developed on conflict transformation to ensure crisis responses lay the foundation for longer-term stability.

The EU seeks to use its **political dialogue** with partners as an occasion to raise conflict prevention issues and the importance of conflict prevention is being taken into account in the on-going work of streamlining these dialogues. The Commission has proposed specific articles on conflict prevention to be included in the new Political Dialogue and Co-operation Agreements being negotiated between the EU and both the Andean Community and Central America. Similar articles are already included in the Cotonou Agreement which entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003, strengthening political dialogue between the EU and 78 African, Caribbean and Pacific states.

As noted in the Commission Communication on Conflict Prevention<sup>1</sup>, EU tools such as démarches, political declarations and sanctions have conflict prevention implications. Actions over the previous year are listed in the Annual Report<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> COM (2001)211 final

<sup>2</sup> cf. Annual report (doc. 7038/03 and 7038/03 COR 1)

The “Annual Report on the EC **development policy** and the implementation of external assistance” sets out progress made on mainstreaming conflict prevention in community instruments. An analysis of Country and Regional Strategy Papers demonstrates that, on the basis of country conflict assessments, the Commission has put more emphasis at the level of programming of assistance on areas such as strengthening of the rule of law, support to democratic institutions (e.g. election monitoring), development of the civil society, reform of the security sector and other specific post-conflict measures. The **Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM)** has played an important role in this context, allowing the European Community to respond urgently to the needs of countries undergoing or moving towards crisis and developing conflict prevention approaches in countries or regions showing significant signs of instability. A report on the first two years of operation of the RRM (*The Rapid Reaction Mechanism – supporting the EU’s Policy Objectives in Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management*) was sent to Council and Parliament in April 2003.

There are four on-going projects in implementation of the EU Joint action 2002/589/CFSP on Small Arms and Light Weapons (**SALW**): the destruction of ammunition in Albania (recently adopted by Council), Cambodia, South East Europe Regional Clearinghouse for Small Arms Reduction and UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The latter three projects are due to terminate in 2003 and discussion is underway on their prolongation.

There is a strong conflict-prevention dimension in the ongoing work within the EU on **Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction**. The General Affairs and External Relations Council on 14 April 2003 instructed the Secretary General / High Representative, in association with the Commission, and the Political and Security Committee, to continue work on a global threat assessment, a long term strategy and the options presented in a Council Secretariat / Commission document, which had formed the basis of the Council discussion of the issue of WMDs, as well as contributions by Member States, with a view to making concrete proposals for submission to the Thessaloniki European Council.

The EC has taken a key role in the **Kimberley process**, which resulted in the successful entry into force of a certification scheme in early 2003. This aims at cutting a source of revenue to rebel groups by establishing an international control regime for import and export of rough diamonds. A similar effort is being made to tackle the links between **illegal timber export** and conflict. The potential for conflict over **scarce water resources** is another area where there has been action over the past year. An EU Water Initiative was launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development with a work programme in support of improved management of transboundary river basins.

During the year 2002, the **Council Common Position concerning conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa** (2001/374/CFSP) continued to serve as guideline for activities undertaken to contribute to the prevention, management and resolution of violent conflicts in Africa by strengthening African capacity and means of action in this field. A review of the Common Position is under way based on in-depth studies being undertaken in Angola, Nigeria Central African Republic and the countries in the Great Lakes region.

## **6. Co-operation and partnerships**

On the basis of arrangements agreed at the European Council in Göteborg, Ministerial Troika meetings with the UNSG and meetings of the HR and the Commissioner for External Relations with the UNSG and UNDSG (the latest early May) provided for dialogue at senior political level with the UN. Regular PSC luncheons with UNDSG (latest on 15 May) and increasing staff-to-staff contacts were instrumental to discuss operational issues with the UN, including possible co-operation in crisis management.

Efforts are also being stepped up to increase exchange of information at working level on specific countries and regions. This has been facilitated by contacts with the UN Framework Team for co-ordination on early warning & preventive action, a structure associating all relevant UN agencies and Departments and dealing with situation analysis in a conflict prevention perspective. Complementary or joint activities were undertaken in a



number of unstable or post-conflict areas, such as Afghanistan, Ivory Coast, Indonesia (Aceh), Democratic Republic of Congo and Eritrea. The EU/UN financial arrangements agreement, signed on 29 April 2003 by the Commission and the UN will make it easier to co-operate on preventive initiatives with the UN in future.

During the Danish and Greek Presidencies, the EU and **OSCE** have further intensified their dialogue and practical co-operation at all levels. There have been regular political exchanges at Ministerial level, the PSC Troika travelled to Vienna to meet with the OSCE Troika and EU HoMs in July 2002 and March 2003, and both the PSC and the COSCE Working Groups have met regularly with SG Kubis and other OSCE representatives. Furthermore, headquarter working contacts between the General Secretariat of the Council, the Commission Services and the OSCE Secretariat have intensified. There is also close co-operation on the ground, not least in Bosnia Herzegovina (between EUPM and the OSCE mission), in FYROM (where the European Commission funds police experts detached to the OSCE spillover mission), and in Central Asia (on legislative reform, national human rights institutions and Ombudsman offices).

Follow up to the Helsingborg recommendations on co-operation in conflict prevention was discussed at the annual quadripartite meeting between the EU and the **Council of Europe** on 5 September 2002. SG Schwimmer has met with the COSCE Working Group, which has discussed ways of enhancing co-operation between the EU and the Council of Europe.

The Africa-Europe Ministerial Meeting in November 2002 evaluated progress made in the eight priority subjects of the Africa-Europe dialogue and urged continued work in the area of prevention and settlement of conflicts. As a first contribution from the European side to the new peace and security agenda of the **African Union**, an EC programme in support of AU peace building and transition activities was signed in Addis Ababa on 2 April 2003. This programme's prime objective is to fund the operational activities of the Peace and Security Council, and secondly to work on AU capacity building in the transition period. Support is based on the AU indicative work programme on peace and security issues and it will primarily finance AU mediation and peace monitoring activities.

Practical support to peacebuilding initiatives in the Americas included assistance to the Organisation of American States (**OAS**) in its efforts to implement possible agreements reached between the parties in Venezuela through an OAS mediated dialogue and support to the Andean Community General Secretariat to implement its obligations regarding the implementation of the "Lima Commitment" on stability and conflict prevention.

Partnership with regional organisations in other areas has also addressed peace and security issues. For example, at the Fourth **Asia-Europe Meeting Summit** in September 2002 leaders pledged to work closely to combat threats to global peace and security, a concern which was reflected at the 14<sup>th</sup> EU-ASEAN Ministerial meeting in January 2003.

In March 2003, the Council endorsed a paper on dialogue and co-operation on European Security and Defence Policy between the EU and **Mediterranean Partners**, with a view to enhancing transparency and further strengthening mutual understanding, and exploring more concrete ideas and proposals for co-operation.

The role of **civil society** in conflict prevention, both in terms of advocacy during the policy making process and as partners in the delivery of assistance, was highlighted in the Commission's Communication "Participation of non-state actors in EC development Policy" (COM (2002) 598 final). The participation of non-state actors is a fundamental principle of co-operation between the EU and ACP countries and was given important more impetus in early 2003 with the entry into force of the EU-ACP Cotonou agreement. A conference under the auspices of the Greek Presidency ("Civil Society Participation in EC Development Policy", Athens, 5-6 May) addressed the respective roles of the EU and civil society in EC development policy and concluded inter alia that peace was the key issue for development.

Co-operation with **the private sector** has been developed in the context of the ongoing European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Launched on 16th October 2002 and chaired by the Commission, this brings together European representative organisations of employers, business networks, trade unions and NGOs. The Commission has proposed that the round table on development aspects of CSR address

economies in conflict including the positive and negative role of businesses in conflict zones and international financial transparency. This complements the G8 extractive industries transparency initiative launched at the G8 Summit 2/3 June 2003.

### **Way Ahead**

Conflict prevention will remain at the heart of all aspects of the EU's external relations. Continued implementation of the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflict is, and will remain, of key importance in the context of further efforts at 'mainstreaming' of the conflict prevention dimension throughout all areas of EU external action.

Building on the progress already achieved to date by the EU, the Council and its bodies, in conjunction with the Commission as appropriate, will carry forward work towards fulfilment of this objective at both regional and thematic levels.

Conflict prevention will continue to be a central element within the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Security and Defence Policy as they are developed.

The PSC is tasked with ensuring that emphasis on conflict prevention is maintained as EU CFSP/ESDP become fully operational.

The incoming Italian and Irish EU Presidencies are invited to carry this work forward. A further progress report on implementation of the EU Programme will be submitted to the June 2004 European Council.

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