

Modtaget via elektronisk post. Der tages forbehold for evt. fejl

Europaudvalget
(Alm. del - bilag 416)
Det Europæiske Råd
(Offentligt)

URU, Alm. del - bilag 93 (Løbenr. 6248)

Medlemmerne af Folketingets

Europaudvalg og deres stedfortrædere

Bilag	Journalnummer	Kontor	
1	400.C.2-0	EU-sekr.	5. december 2000

Til underretning for Folketingets Europaudvalg vedlægges i forbindelse med det ordinære møde i Det Europæiske Råd i Nice den 7.-9. december 2000 rapport fra Generalsekretæren/Den Højtstående Repræsentant og Kommissionen vedr. konfliktforebyggelse.

COVER NOTE

From :	General Secretariat
To :	Council
Date :	30 November 2000
Subject :	Conflict Prevention: Report by the Secretary General/High Representative and the Commission

Delegations will find attached a report by the Secretary General/High Representative and the Commission to the Nice European Council on Conflict Prevention.

Improving the Coherence and Effectiveness of European Union Action in the Field of Conflict Prevention

Report Presented to the Nice European Council by the Secretary General/High Representative and the Commission

Executive Summary

Main challenges facing the European Union in effective conflict prevention

- *to reaffirm and maintain conflict prevention as a fixed priority of EU external action;*
- *to establish and sustain priorities for action in the field of conflict prevention;*
- *to move the timescale for EU action forward, becoming progressively more pro-active and less reactive;*

- to ensure the coherent use of what is now a very broad range of resources in pursuit of priorities, better integrating development, trade, economic and humanitarian instruments with CFSP instruments and civilian and military capabilities for crisis management;
- to deploy those resources in a timely, comprehensive and integrated way;
- to build and sustain effective partnerships with those who share our values and priorities at global, regional, national and local level;
- to develop targeted common approaches to countries and regions at risk of conflict taking account of CFSP, development, trade, economic and justice and home affairs issues.

Key recommendations in the short term

- early consideration of conflict prevention by the GAC, possibly during annual orientation debate, and periodic identification of priority areas for EU action;
- SG/HR and Commission to assist in overseeing implementation of policies;
- the Political and Security Committee invited to develop role as a focal point in developing conflict prevention policies in CFSP and CSDP;
- Commission to bring forward Communications on Conflict Prevention and on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development;
- Council and Commission to pursue review of relevant budgetary regulations and procedures and to examine issues of co-ordination between Community instruments and those of Member States;
- intensify coordination with the UN, building on the UNSG proposals, and supporting drive for greater UN effectiveness generated by the Millennium and Brahimi Reports;
- deepen dialogue with and support for key partners including OSCE, Council of Europe and ICRC, as well as academic and NGO communities;
- draw on experience of partners in preparing EU action plans and approaches to specific countries and regions;
- systematically support the rights of access to potential conflict zones by ICRC, OSCE and UN Human Rights Rapporteurs;
- prioritise support for effective action on small arms including in UN and G8 frameworks;
- ratify and implement new international instruments including the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court and the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stock Piling, Production and Transfer of Anti Personnel Mines and On their Destruction;
- review use of diplomatic instruments for conflict prevention including the role of Special Representatives and heads of mission;
- Council Working Groups invited to develop the practice of scheduling informal discussion with relevant partner organisations;
- better coordination of information sources available to Union and regular preparation by the Policy Unit and by the Commission of papers on conflict prevention issues for consideration by policy makers.

I Introduction

1. Conflict prevention is at the heart of the European Union which is in itself a strikingly successful example of how reconciliation, stability and prosperity can be promoted through closer cooperation and understanding. The process of enlargement aims to extend these benefits to a wider circle of European states. Preserving peace, promoting stability and strengthening international security worldwide is a fundamental objective for the Union, and preventing violent conflict constitutes one of its most important external policy challenges.

2. Conflict bears a human cost in suffering and undermines economic development. It also affects EU interests by creating instability, by reducing trade and putting investments at risk, by imposing a heavy financial burden in reconstruction and ultimately by threatening the security of its citizens. The financial costs of preventing conflict are small compared to the cost of addressing its consequences. Millions of civilians in Africa have died from violent conflict in recent years, and our efforts in support of lasting economic and social development are repeatedly set back by recurring conflict. Conflict has moved much closer in recent years to the EU's own borders: an estimated 200,000 people have been killed and some 1.8 million remain displaced following a decade of conflict in the Western Balkans. Democratic change in the FRY has opened new prospects for lasting peace and stability in the region but the process of recovery will be a long one and the financial cost high. Already the Union has invested some Euro 18 billion in reconstruction for the region as a whole. Recent developments in the Middle East are a reminder of how rapidly conflict can escalate, with potential consequences not only for regional stability but also for the global economy.

3. Against the background of its work on strengthening the Common European Security and Defence Policy, the European Council at Feira underlined its determination to prevent conflict and invited the Secretary General/High Representative and the Commission to *"submit to the Nice European Council, as a basis for further work, concrete recommendations on how to improve the coherence and effectiveness of the European Union action in the field of conflict prevention, fully taking into account and building upon existing instruments, capabilities and policy guidelines."*

4. The purpose of this report is to build on the existing work undertaken by the Union, to indicate some of the broader challenges facing the Union as it prepares to undertake further work on conflict prevention, to put forward some concrete recommendations aimed at improving our effectiveness in the short term, and to set out a more coherent framework for possible future action.

II Coherent action: the central challenge of conflict prevention

5. Conflict prevention is not a new issue on the EU's agenda. For some years now, the Union has made sustained efforts to adapt its external action to a changing international security environment characterised by a growth in conflict within borders where civilians are increasingly both the victims and the intended targets of violent conflict. The Council has repeatedly emphasised the importance of effective early action to prevent violent conflict. Our experience of the consequences of conflict has been instrumental in the development of civilian and military crisis management capabilities, and is a driving factor in the development of a more effective and responsive common foreign and security policy. A key challenge now facing the Union is to ensure the most effective use of the full range of tools which have become available in order to prevent conflict from occurring in the first place.

6. The European Union is well placed to engage in conflict prevention. Its capabilities include trade policy instruments, cooperation agreements, development assistance and other forms of economic cooperation, social and environmental policies, humanitarian assistance from both ECHO and member states, civilian and military crisis management capabilities, diplomatic instruments and cooperation in the area of Justice and Home Affairs. In many of these areas the Union has very considerable influence. It is the world's largest provider of development and humanitarian assistance and the biggest trading partner.

7. Specific situations of potential conflict present unique challenges. Policies aimed at defusing tensions in the Middle East will be quite different from those deployed to prevent a recurrence of conflict in the Western Balkans or in the Horn of Africa. The central issue for the Union is one of coherence in deploying the right combination and sequence of instruments in a timely and integrated manner. This demands greater coherence and complementarity at several levels: between the instruments and capabilities available within each pillar, between the pillars themselves, between Member State and Community activities, and between the Union and its international partners in conflict prevention.

8. Moreover, the coherence of conflict prevention policies cannot be separated from the broader issue of how the EU sets priorities in the area of external relations. While some regions, including those close to the EU's own borders, will remain a high priority, the Union must be ready to engage elsewhere when confronted with a clear risk of violent conflict. The work under way since Evian on improving coordination of EU external assistance will also serve to improve our ability to address situations of emerging conflict.

9. Policies can only be effective if the Union adopts a proactive approach, identifying problems before they become acute, and translating early warning into early action. Measuring the success of conflict prevention policies is particularly difficult, and the absence of easily identifiable results can be a stumbling block in securing support at a political level. Political will is essential if the Union is to develop and sustain a new emphasis at all levels of our external action: a shift from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.

Recommendations

- *Conflict prevention should be addressed by the GAC, possibly during its annual orientation debate on external relations, integrating the issue into its work and addressing the broader issue of coherence at Council level, including with the Development Council.*
- *The GAC should regularly identify priority areas for EU action in the field of conflict prevention, taking account of recommendations from the SG/HR and the Commission. Where priorities are identified, the Council should invite the SG/HR and the Commission to oversee the implementation of policies and to report accordingly.*
- *The Union should set the explicit aim of developing targeted, common approaches to countries and regions at risk of conflict taking account of CFSP, development, trade, economic and justice and home affairs issues.*

III. Building more effective partnerships

10. The causes of conflict are usually complex and therefore require complex policy responses which can only be delivered by a broad range of actors, some of whom have specific mandates under international law. Recent experience clearly demonstrates the need for the European Union to cooperate closely in this area with other regional and international organisations as well as with the non-governmental sector.

11. The United Nations, with its Charter responsibilities, global presence and broad institutional framework, is uniquely placed both to contribute to tackling the root causes of conflict and to take shorter term preventive measures. The UNSG has recently made specific proposals for strengthening dialogue with the Union. Agencies such as UNHCR, UNDP and UNICEF, as well as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs, have access to extensive information networks and can play an important role in addressing specific problems associated with conflict. The UN is currently taking steps towards greater effectiveness in conflict prevention. The European Union can play a key role in helping to maintain the momentum to this work.

12. Regional cooperation and the growth of regional and sub-regional organisations is a development which in itself plays a valuable role in conflict prevention. Organisations such as the OAS, OAU, SADC, ECOWAS, the ARF and ASEAN are adopting an operational role in this area. Key partners for the EU are the OSCE and the Council of Europe. Each plays a distinct role: the OSCE through its field missions, the High Commissioner on National Minorities and its emerging mechanisms for preventing and managing conflict, and the Council of Europe through its Parliamentary Assembly and its role in standard setting and human rights. Partnership for Peace, through its work on Petersberg Tasks, and the EAPC can also play a valuable contributory role in conflict prevention.

13. The G8, IMF and World Bank have taken an active role in developing an approach to conflict prevention which focuses on the broader economic factors underlying conflict, including issues such as the trade in small arms and diamonds.

14. Non-governmental organisations have an increasingly influential role to play in conflict prevention. Many are well-placed to work with the victims of conflict and to identify and address root causes at an early stage. Others have done valuable work on policy elaboration and conflict mediation. Experience in Serbia demonstrates that a strong and active civil society and independent media are themselves important factors for democratic change and long-term stability. The growth in the number of civilian victims of conflict underlines the increasingly important role of the International Committee of the Red Cross in promoting and upholding humanitarian law.

15. The EU's extensive political dialogue offers regular opportunities to address the issue of conflict prevention with our partners in a more flexible and timely way, both with those who are directly at risk of conflict and those with the potential to assist those at risk.

16. Building effective partnerships with such a broad range of actors sets specific challenges for the European Union: first, to establish a focussed dialogue with agreed contact points based on mutual priorities; second, to incorporate their input into our own policy formulation; third, to establish practical cooperation on operational issues and fourth, to support mandate based organisations in playing their role for conflict prevention to the full. The principles guiding our approach to partnership should include those of added value, comparative advantage and mutually reinforcing institutions.

Recommendations

- *Further development of mechanisms for coordination with the UN system, building on the proposals already put forward by the UN SG.*
- *Support the drive for greater UN effectiveness in conflict prevention, maintaining the momentum generated by the Millennium Report and the Brahimi Report on peacekeeping.*
- *Deepen dialogue with other key international and regional partners such as the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the ICRC, with a view to identifying common priorities, strengthening support for their mandates and cooperating in the implementation of EU policies.*
- *Draw on the experience of other actors in preparing EU action plans and approaches to specific countries and regions.*
- *Intensify dialogue with the academic and NGO communities in order to improve effectiveness in identifying potential conflict and to ensure close convergence of effort on priority issues.*
- *Systematically support the rights of access to potential conflict zones by other mandated organisations including the ICRC, OSCE and UN Human Rights Rapporteurs.*
- *Consistently integrate conflict prevention priorities into our political dialogue with international partners (as is already the case with Canada and Japan) as well as with those directly at risk of conflict.*

- *Support conflict prevention initiatives in the G8 framework, in particular in areas where the G8 can bring particular value such as small arms and the illicit trade in high-value commodities.*

IV Long-term measures

17. There is a wide range of measures which can be deployed over the long-term in support of an overall strategy of conflict prevention. Many of these already constitute a major part of the Union's action in the area of external relations. In general, long-term action is not focussed on the avoidance of a specific and imminent outbreak of conflict, but is designed to address the underlying causes of conflict and thereby to contribute to the overall objective of peace and stability. The role of the Union as a global trading partner and as the largest donor of development cooperation give it the possibility of contributing to conflict prevention even in those areas which are not the subject of specific policy priorities. The recently agreed standard framework for Country Strategy Papers should become an important basis for ensuring coherence between the long term cooperation programs and other complementary actions aimed at preventing conflict. Long term action may be divided into horizontal instruments which are explicit in their overall objective of preventing conflict, and broader policies which address wider economic and developmental issues, but in doing so have an important role to play in creating the conditions for longer-term stability.

18. Many of the horizontal issues are relatively new on the international agenda. The establishment of the International Criminal Court and the creation of new international instruments governing landmines and the issue of child soldiers will enable us to address new and emerging concerns but must be followed up by sustained and concerted efforts aimed at full ratification of the instruments and implementation of their standards. This calls for closer convergence between Community and Member State programmes aimed at addressing such issues. Our emphasis on human rights values and on upholding international legal standards provides a framework for much of this effort. Human rights and humanitarian violations lie at the heart of many conflicts. Addressing the gap between international commitments and practical implementation must be a priority in our conflict prevention policies.

19. Other concerns have yet to be addressed, not least the issue of the trade in small arms and the trade in diamonds. The Union should continue to support such initiatives which have a clear role in preventing conflict and should remain open to suggestions (both from inside and outside) for further imaginative proposals which would deserve its support.

20. Increasingly important also are the wide range of instruments falling under the heading of 'Justice and Home Affairs'. Measures designed to tackle organised crime, drug trafficking and money laundering all have the long-term effect of creating greater stability and therefore contributing to the prevention of conflict. Initiatives undertaken in recent years in the U.N., G-8 and other contexts have helped to create frameworks in which concerted action on these issues can be taken at international level. The Union has been involved in all of these initiatives and has sought to adapt its own instruments in support of them. The challenge for the Union now is to develop policy-making mechanisms which allow it to integrate these initiatives into its overall political approach to specific countries and regions, to assess their respective benefits, and to set priorities for the future.

21. Alongside these horizontal measures, there is a wide range of instruments which can contribute to the prevention of conflict. These should be used in a more targeted manner to address the root-causes of violent conflicts, such as inequality of opportunity, lack of legitimacy and effectiveness of government, lack of frameworks for peaceful conciliation of interests and absence of an active and organised civil society. In many countries, conflict prevention can also be considered a development objective because without peace and democratic stability there can be no poverty alleviation and no sustainable development.

22. The most effective way for the Union to use its cooperation instruments in conflict prevention is by integrating long-term peace-building measures into its country cooperation strategies. In countries in unstable situations, specific projects and programs within the cooperation sectors included in the Country Strategy Papers should be dedicated to supporting a peaceful resolution of conflict and strengthening the democratic state. These should support political dialogue and mediation efforts, democratic institutions, the rule of law and the administration of justice, an effective and impartial police force, and, for countries emerging from armed conflict, the demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants, including child

soldiers. Furthermore, in traditional sectors of development cooperation (infrastructure, health, education etc.), the reduction of existing imbalances in a society, whether ethnic, regional, or economic, must be taken into account in allocating funds to specific sectors.

23. The Union should also strengthen its support for non-state actors which play a role in developing a culture of democracy, tolerance and peaceful resolution of conflict, through support for projects and programmes which assist independent media, civil society, local NGOs, women's groups etc.

24. Effective deployment of both horizontal measures and measures designed to tackle the root causes of conflict requires much greater coordination between Community instruments and those relevant instruments of the Member States. This should involve cooperation both in-country and between capitals at an early stage.

Recommendations

- *Closer consideration should be given to coherence and coordination between measures envisaged or taken in the different phases of a conflict or crisis situation. The Commission will present in January 2001 a Communication on Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development which will i.a. include proposals to enable a quicker and more coherent transition from one phase of assistance to another in countries going through a crisis, whether political or other in nature.*
- *An inventory should be made of EU instruments and policies which could be brought to bear on conflict situations. A Commission Communication on conflict prevention in Spring 2001 will focus specifically on the use and possible adaptation of Community instruments in this respect. The Commission will also pursue work on the "Conflict Prevention Handbook" detailing instruments and procedures.*
- *In the context of "post-Evian" discussions on ways to improve co-ordination between Community instruments for external cooperation and those of Member States, greater exchange of information on economic and political issues, both at the level of capitals and in country, is recommended. This should include a revitalisation of the Electronic Bulletin Board (EBB), established by the Commission in 1999 to link country desk officers in the Commission, Council and Member States.*
- *An early decision by the Council on the proposed recasting of the Financial Regulation would facilitate the successful completion of the reform of EC external cooperation programmes. In this context, the Commission will also pursue internally the objective of more rapid mobilisation of funds under its various cooperation programmes.*
- *The Union should give priority to effective preparation for the UN Conference on Small Arms and to the ratification and implementation of new international instruments including the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court and the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stock Piling, Production and Transfer of Anti Personnel Mines and On their Destruction.*

V Short term measures

25. Situations which have the potential to lead to conflict in the short term are often characterised by complexity and rapid change. If it is to use its instruments and capabilities to best effect, the Union must address specific challenges to the way in which policy is formulated and implemented.

26. First, efforts at conflict prevention must be underpinned by vigorous and continuous diplomatic engagement, involving the transmission of clear messages to countries and regions in a situation of political deterioration as well as to its other international partners. Progress has been made. The EU's traditional diplomatic instruments such as structured political dialogue, démarches, and high-level visits are increasingly effective. The use of special representatives owed sustained engagement in both the Middle East, Africa and the Western Balkans. The appointment of the High Representative with new resources in the Council Secretariat has raised the level of our diplomatic

engagement and broadened its scope. This must be underpinned however by a more focused, flexible and robust approach to dialogue than is often the case at present. There is a need for more informal contact with a broad range of actors, clear mandates and for a more effective use of the privileged relationships of individual Member States in support of a common political objective. Such an approach has been successful in assisting a peaceful transition to democracy in Serbia. The effectiveness of dialogue will be further enhanced by the development of ESDP and the development of a comprehensive range of civilian and military instruments, broadening the toolbox for conflict prevention and enabling the EU to deploy civilian and military crisis management instruments for conflict prevention purposes.

27. Second, moving the focus of policy-making away from a responsive to a more proactive approach represents a particular challenge for the Union. The earlier the Union is able to anticipate and address problems, the lower the ultimate human and financial cost. Conflict prevention has to begin in situations of "unstable peace", where structural problems are apparent but have not yet resulted in open violence. The Union has access to information from many sources and a range of capabilities, many of them new, for assessing situations and formulating policy options. Their potential has still to be fully developed. Translating early warning into early action will require the application of political will by the Council and its bodies at all levels in order to encourage the early assessment of potential problems and the formulation of possible policy options.

28. Third, as is the case with our longer term measures, there is a clear need for comprehensive and integrated policies which address the full range of factors which can produce or exacerbate violence. These include discrimination against minorities, forced population displacement, the abuse of human rights, and weak institutions, the availability of small arms, abuse of humanitarian law, exclusion of international organisations and curtailment of media freedoms.

29. Fourth, a recurring challenge is the need for responsiveness in the deployment of appropriate instruments. Deployment can involve a range of authorities and different procedures for decision making and accountability: humanitarian aid and trade policy fall within Community competence while responsibility for third pillar instruments and new civilian and military capabilities lies primarily with Member States. Achieving coherence and responsiveness is not solely a matter of instruments but of political will.

Recommendations

- *Evaluate use of diplomatic instruments for conflict prevention (including use of Special Representatives) with objective of more focussed, flexible and robust diplomatic engagement.*
- *The Political and Security Committee should continue to develop its potential as a focal point within the framework of CFSP and CSDP for the development, implementation and monitoring of conflict prevention policies.*
- *Council Working Groups should support PSC in this task and develop the practice of joint meetings and informal discussion with relevant partner organisations.*
- *More proactive use of heads of mission for conflict prevention, including through visits to potential conflict zones, and the preparation of regular systematic reports.*
- *Better coordination of the wide range of information sources now available for identifying and monitoring potential conflicts including Member States commitment to sharing all relevant information.*
- *Regular preparation by the Policy Unit and by the Commission of conflict prevention papers for consideration by policy makers.*

VI Conclusion

30. Effective action by the EU in the area of conflict prevention will require sustained political will and should become a priority. Future work should acknowledge our failures but also build on our successes. The Union has, for example, made a very substantial contribution to the establishment of permanent stability in Central and Eastern Europe. The rapid delivery of political and financial support to Montenegro was important in stabilising a potential conflict situation while our support for democratic forces in Serbia and the recent Zagreb Summit with its emphasis on the Stability and Association Process have opened up new prospects for lasting peace in the region. It can build also on successes further afield. After a decade which has seen many failures, the wider international community has, for example, acted to address the spiral of conflict in East Timor and has stepped in to provide the support and security necessary for the re-establishment of public authority and civil society.

31. The challenges which face the Union as it sets about improving its coherence and effectiveness for conflict prevention are similar to those which it faces throughout its external action: to establish and sustain priorities for action; to ensure the coherent use of what is now a very broad range of resources in pursuit of those priorities; to deploy those resources in a pro-active, flexible and integrated way; and to build and sustain effective partnerships with those who share our values and priorities at global, regional, national and local level. Addressing these issues in the context of conflict prevention can give impetus to our efforts towards greater coherence in all external action. It is an ambitious political undertaking and will be achieved only with the exercise of political will. Nonetheless, it demands a high place in the Council's priorities. The benefits of effective conflict prevention to human life, political stability, national and community budget trade and investment will far outweigh the effort invested.
