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NOTE

From :	Presidency
To :	Delegations
Subject :	Implementation of the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts

Delegations will find enclosed a draft version of the Presidency report on the implementation of the European Union Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, to be submitted to the European Council of Sevilla.

ANNEX

1. Introductory remarks

In accordance with the mandate received, the Spanish Presidency presents to the European Council of Sevilla the following report on the implementation of the Göteborg Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts. This report takes into account the discussions held at the seminar organised by the Spanish Presidency in Seu D’Urgell on the 18th and 19th of March 2002. The General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission respectively presented report his matter. Several Delegations also informed on activities carried out by Member States in implementing the Göteborg Programme, including on the elaboration of National Conflict Prevention Programmes.

Since the adoption of the Göteborg programme, important efforts have been made in all aspects of the external relations of the EU, including through the development of European Security and Defence Policy. Nevertheless, it is necessary to strive for greater coherence within the European Union (in terms of activities carried out under the different Treaties, as well as between the EU and its Member States) when undertaking preventive actions. A systematic approach to Conflict Preventi on leading to early action has been decided upon by the Council. Co-operation with International Organisations and NGO’s must be enhanced. The impact of intercultural dialogue in

conflict prevention should be further explored. Finally, the limits that current CFSP budget lines impose to conflict prevention activities within this specific field are a matter of concern.

2. Review of preventive actions undertaken by the EU since the adoption of the programme

The EU has adopted in the last year a considerable number of concrete actions with a clear conflict prevention aim. A successful example is the EU's policy in the Balkans region. Other examples are its policy in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Great Lakes region and the EU's commitment to take forward the fight against terrorism as a result of the 11 September attacks. Not all efforts undertaken by the EU in this field have been successful. While there are limits to what the EU can achieve, reviewing these cases can help the EU to advance in the refinement of its instruments for conflict prevention and lead to the development of more efficient preventive strategies.

1. A systematic approach to conflict prevention for early warning and early action

In relation to early warning and as foreseen in the EU programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, broad consideration of potential conflict issues was given by the General Affairs Council in July 2001 and January 2002 on the basis of reports presented to the Political and Security Committee by the General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission.

The Commission maintains a "watch-list" of priority countries, based on conflict assessments for more than 120 countries. The Commission is monitoring developments in these countries closely. For the purposes of integrating a conflict prevention perspective in the areas of its responsibility, and to contribute to the overview of potential conflicts issues, the Commission has developed a set of conflict indicators.

For its part, the Council Secretariat has developed an early warning process based on overview reports and risk assessments for the Political and Security Committee. These are undertaken jointly by the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit (PU), the EU Military Staff Intelligence Division and the Joint Situation Centre. Steps have also been taken to intensify consultation with external partners as an input to this process. Indicators are being progressively introduced as a basis for this work.

The experience of the Belgian and Spanish Presidencies demonstrated that additional efforts were required in order to ensure the identification of priority areas and regions for EU preventive actions. The General Affairs Council therefore agreed, on the 13th of May 2002, on a systematic approach to Conflict Prevention, on the basis of the above mentioned considerations, and oriented at ensuring more effective early warning, leading to early action. The main role of the Political and Security Committee in bringing issues to the attention of the Council, through COREPER, and in the follow up to GAC decisions in the area of conflict prevention, the need to clearly associate the geographic working groups with the EU's conflict prevention activities, and the role of Heads of Mission, as the main EU "sensors" in the field, must be stressed. Thematic CFSP working groups could also provide appropriate contributions. In examining the likelihood of conflict in a country/region, there should be an evaluation of the potential impact of an eventual conflict on EU Member States and international stability, the EU's capacity of influence/interest in the region/country, the instruments at the EU's disposal, the role of other actors on the ground (international organisations, other States, NGOs...), and the possibility to co-operate with them, as well as the need to ensure the follow-up of decisions taken.

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- **Short term and long term prevention**

A clear link exists between short term and long term prevention. When reacting to a situation where the risk of conflict is imminent, apart from the more immediate preventive measures aimed at defusing tension and establishing paths of dialogue, root causes of conflict have to be addressed from the outset. More reflection is needed on the use of crisis management capabilities, particularly in the civilian field, for preventive purposes. In certain cases, military capabilities (e.g. preventive deployments) can be a component of a comprehensive preventive strategy.

Although the EU has global concerns and responsibilities, the impact of its actions on countries or regions will vary. In deciding its conflict prevention policy, the EU must take fully into account the role of other international actors, in order to ensure the necessary co-ordination with them and to allow the EU to target areas where it is best placed to act.

a. Instruments aimed at short term prevention

The EU has been working on the development of a wide variety of instruments that can be used in short-term prevention, such as fact finding missions (including the possibility of Joint Council-Commission fact finding missions), monitoring missions (the EUMM), facilitators (v.g. the Togo facilitators), election observation missions, human rights monitors, special representatives and other forms of representatives (Presidency representatives, the possibility of tasking senior officials of the Secretariat of the Council, or of the Commission, and other envoys).

At Community level, the **Rapid Reaction Mechanism** is fully operational. It is being used to bring quickly a host of measures to bear on a conflict situation, which would previously have been subject to more cumbersome procedures (e.g. FYROM, Afghanistan and DRC).

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a. Dealing with root causes of conflict (long term prevention)

Since the adoption of the Göteborg Programme, the European Union has deployed considerable efforts in mainstreaming conflict prevention issues in all its activities. Nevertheless, difficulties of acquiring a comprehensive perspective on Conflict Prevention remain. The European Union, in the aftermath of the 11th September attacks, has carried out a considerable effort in deploying a comprehensive and coherent strategy against terrorism, addressing multiple aspects. A number of elements of this strategy are closely related to Conflict Prevention. Actions undertaken in the fight against terrorism and the EU-Africa dialogue can be considered to be coherent strategies. Nevertheless, difficulties of acquiring a comprehensive perspective on Conflict Prevention remain. The convenience of establishing preventive strategies in other fields should also be studied, and should include non-state actors and other international organisations.

In addressing the root causes, development co-operation with its focus on poverty reduction is an integral part of structural conflict prevention. In this context, the six key areas for action identified in the Development Policy Statement adopted in November 2000 by the Council and the European Commission should remain the focus of the Union's activities. The position held by the EU at the recent Monterrey Conference on financing for international development is also highly relevant. The Cotonou agreement is a good model of an integrated approach to trade, aid and a comprehensive political dialogue, which will make an important contribution to conflict prevention in the ACP region. The forthcoming negotiations on the conclusions of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the EU and the ACP countries should be considered in the same perspective. The Commission has notably advanced in the mainstreaming of conflict prevention in the Community Development Co-operation Programmes through the use of conflict indicators and of the Country Strategy Papers.

Conflict prevention requires the combined use of various policies and instruments at the EU's disposal :

- trade policy, in particular, an "open-door" approach such as the EU's "everything-but-arms" initiative, as well as the positive contribution of the EU to the Kimberly process for trade of rough diamonds;
- environmental policy such as the EU's stance on global climate change (Kyoto Protocol);
- human rights issues, including efforts to ensure the respect of minority rights in regions of potential conflicts and of post-conflict rehabilitation, and the EU support for the establishment of an International Criminal Court;
- international financial policies;
- non proliferation, disarmament and arms-control instruments, including those related to small arms and light weapons. Relevant Council working groups have studied the relevance of these issues in the framework of the implementation of the EU Programme on the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, as well as ways to advance further. A report addressing these questions is attached in annex.

The EU is committed to developing these instruments and implementing its policies directly and in other international fora.

1. Co-operation and partnerships

The exchange of information and practical co-operation with the UN system, OSCE, Council of Europe and NATO has been intensified. The development of ESDP has contributed very positively to this. A good example would be work undertaken in the Balkan region, particularly in FYROM and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Also, apart from very many personal individual contacts with representatives of all these institutions, a seminar was organised by the EU in April with representatives of the UN, OSCE, the Council of Europe and NATO, in which development of capabilities in the civilian field of crisis management was discussed.

In the context of the dialogue on conflict prevention and peace-building initiated by the UN Secretary-General, the EU participated in the working level meeting between the UN and regional organisations on 30 April-2 May. Bilateral discussions with the UN covered mechanisms for contact, training, lessons learned and early warning as well as specific regional issues.

The government of Sweden, in close co-ordination with the present and incoming Presidencies of the EU, is preparing a Conference of European Regional Organisations on Conflict Prevention. It will take place in Helsingborg the 28th and 29th of August and is meant as a contribution to the strengthening of the European preventive capacities. It will also reflect on how efforts undertaken in the European context can better contribute to the strengthening of preventive capacities in other regions of the world.

As a further contribution to this dialogue and to enhance the co-operation between organisations involved in conflict prevention in Europe, thereby strengthening the preventive capacities of the international community as a whole, the EU is currently preparing the conference "Partners in Prevention" to be hosted by the Government of Sweden in Helsingborg on 29th-30th of August. The Conference will also reflect on how efforts undertaken in the European context can better contribute to the strengthening of preventive capacities in other regions of the world.

While the involvement of different organisations can pose a challenge for co-ordination and co-operation, each can provide an added value and in co-operating closely they can further effectively the cause of conflict prevention. The EU will therefore continue to strengthen preventive capacities of regional (e.g. OAU/AU), sub-regional (e.g. SADC, ECOWAS and IGAD) and local organisations and actors outside Europe. More efforts could be made in co-operation between the EU and international financial institutions in the field of Conflict Prevention. Relevant information regarding these issues should be taken into account also in the CFSP context.

Co-operation with other actors and with the stakeholders in a conflict situation is needed in order to achieve sustainable processes and a high degree of ownership. The overall EU-Africa dialogue constitutes an important instrument to develop the partnership relations with the African countries in order to enhance Conflict Prevention capabilities in the continent. It also constitutes an example of a comprehensive conflict prevention strategy.

Co-ordination between the Union and its Member States in accordance with article 19 of the Treaty of the European Union, is a matter of importance. [Progress has been made in the exchange of information about the work of the United Nations Security Council. Further efforts in this direction are being pursued.]

NGOs have an important role to play in conflict prevention. Contacts between the EU and relevant NGO's in conflict prevention, including in the field, are already taking place with a variety of interlocutors (Presidency, Commission and Council General Secretariat). The EU should remain opened to the enhancement of these contacts as necessary, while respecting the autonomy of NGO's.

1. Intercultural dialogue as a means for Conflict Prevention

An exchange of views on the importance of intercultural dialogue as a means for Conflict Prevention took place in the seminar of Seu d'Urgell. It was underlined that prejudices and misconceptions between peoples of different cultural or religious traditions can contribute to the fuelling of conflicts. Exchange of information, as well as education policies, are crucial elements in dispelling the referred to prejudices and misconceptions. The important role of churches, civil society O's in these tasks was underlined. The existence of basic common values, particularly in the field of Human Rights, as an important element for the success of intercultural dialogue was acknowledged.

A great number of initiatives to enhance intercultural dialogue are taking place in many different fora. Within the EU, the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference of Valencia, 22-23rd of April 2002, approved an Action Programme for Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations. Also in the approved Valencia Action Plan the creation of a

Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations was decided. In Brussels, on the 20-21st of March 2002, the European Commission organised a Symposium on Intercultural Dialogue.

5. Way ahead

While significant progress has been made, further implementation of the Göteborg Programme and of the recommendations outlined in this progress report must continue. This remains a shared responsibility of the EU and its Member States. In keeping with the decision to mainstream conflict prevention, the Council and its bodies will, in co-operation with the Commission, continue to implement and evaluate preventive measures as outlined in the programme. The PSC will pay particular attention to ensuring the use of the systematic approach established by the Council, thereby also contributing to the regular reviews of potential conflict issues.

Incoming EU pPresidencies are invited to carry this work forward. [The Greek Presidency is invited to submit a report on the implementation of the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts to the European Council in Thessalonika.]

ANNEX TO THE ANNEX

Contribution by CFSP working groups COARM (conventional arms exports), CODUN (global disarmament and arms control) and CONOP (non-proliferation) to the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts:

The European Council of Göteborg in June 2001 stated in its conclusions that "conflict prevention is one of the main objectives of the Union's external relations and should be integrated in all its relevant aspects, including ESDP, development cooperation and trade." Also, it encouraged future Presidencies, the Commission and the Secretary General/High Representative to promote the implementation of the programme and to make recommendations for its further development.

In the same meeting, the Council endorsed the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, previously drafted by the Swedish Presidency.

Additionally, the UN Secretary General referred to this issue in its report on the "prevention of armed conflicts".

The increase of conflict situations after the end of the cold war and of its tragic consequences (Balkans, Middle East, Central Asia, East Timor, Africa, etc.) has encouraged the development of this new aspect of foreign relations.

On the other hand, the terrorist attacks suffered by the USA on the 11th. September have highlighted the global destabilising power of the terrorist threat, the fight against which remains the priority and guideline of the Spanish Presidency of the EU Council.

The EU, as a successful example of conflict prevention, based on democratic values and the respect of human rights, has a political and moral responsibility to act to prevent the tragic consequences of violent conflicts. In this sense, the present capabilities of CFSP and the future development of ESDP offer an important tool.

Since the adoption of the EU programme by the European Council in Göteborg the EU has made important progress in the systematic use of disarmament, arms control and non proliferation for preventive purposes.

In the framework of CFSP, non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control instruments can play an important role in the prevention of violent conflicts. this contribution could be made through the following elements:

- Contribution of disarmament, arms control and non proliferation in the fight against terrorism: the terrorist attacks of September 11th. have highlighted the new dangers we have to face and underlined the importance of arms control in the areas of conflict prevention and the fight against terrorism even more. The EU has reacted in a determined and effective way to this threat by the adoption of the "targeted initiative" by the GAC on December 10, 2001 and in implementation of this initiative, the "concrete list of measures with regard to the implications of the terrorist threat on the arms control policy of

the EU". Furthermore, the EU has decisively contributed to the adoption of the 56th UNGA resolution on "multilateral cooperation in the area of disarmament and non proliferation and global efforts against terrorism" which stresses the role of multilateralism in the combat against terrorism.

- Multilateral instruments: continued EU efforts to promote strengthening, adherence, and universalisation of treaties and agreements in the disarmament (BWTC, CWC, CCW, etc.) non-proliferation (NPT, CTBT etc.) and arms control (CFE, Vienna Document, Open Skies Treaty etc.) fields will contribute to the prevention of violent conflicts, as such instruments will play a vital role in establishing a confidence and friendly atmosphere between parties, preventing in this way the outburst of violent conflicts.

- Dialogue with third countries: the arms control and non proliferation dialogue with relevant States in the Troika format has been intensified. It is important to continue this dialogue especially with "critical States" in order to convince them of the benefits for all parties of joining the international multilateral regimes in the field of arms control, disarmament and non proliferation. Likewise, the negotiation of regional arms control regimes in particular in unstable or potentially unstable regions outside Europe should be encouraged. Political dialogue with third countries, the promotion of the universality and full compliance of the above mentioned multilateral instruments, and the strengthening of the EU partnership with other relevant countries on this issue may play an important role to this purpose.

- Export controls: a sound and coherent EU policy in this aspect can be a major contribution to conflict prevention, impeding the acquisition and development of weapons by States of concern or terrorist groups. Also, the exchange of information that takes place in the framework of export control regimes and arrangements could be very useful to detect possible destabilising operations in certain regions, as a contribution to the Presidency's early warning conflict prevention programme.

- International disarmament cooperation: both the EU as such and its Member States carry out active cooperation programmes in the field of disarmament, non proliferation and arms control such as demining projects, and for the disposal of SALW and weapons of mass destruction. The preventive nature of these projects renders a significant service to the cause of conflict prevention. The EU cooperation for non proliferation and disarmament with Russia and other CIS States has been intensified with a view to speed up the destruction of chemical weapons, to safeguard nuclear material and installations and to deny potentially dangerous actors the access to the material and the human know-how for the production of weapons of mass destruction. In the context of the terrorist attacks this aspect will gain even more importance in the years to come. Furthermore, this cooperation will have a positive impact on local capacity building and the assumption of local responsibility for conflict prevention and peace.

- Control of small arms and light weapons: the EU has actively contributed to the adoption of the UN action plan on the "conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects" in July 2001. It will continue to work for a broad international consensus on the aims and principles of its "joint action on the fight against the destabilising accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons". In this aspect the EU projects for the collection and destruction of small arms are an important practical contribution to conflict prevention and conflict management.
