



Advisory Board to the Federal Government
Civilian Crisis Prevention and Peacebuilding



Annual Conference of the Advisory Board to the Federal
Government for Civilian Crisis Prevention and Peacebuilding
on 2 October 2020

What Do Crises Teach Us?

Civilian Crisis Prevention in Germany and the EU

Documentation

1st Panel

Perceptions of Crises and How They Shape Prevention Efforts

Panellists:

Dr Chukwuemeka B. Eze, Director, West African Network for Peacebuilding; Dr Gilles Yabi, Director, Think Tank Citoyen de l' Afrique de l' Ouest; Maria Klatten, Head of Africa Department, Misereor; Walter Bartsch, Head of Field Office Agadez, EUCAP Sahel

Facilitation:

Dr Astrid Irrgang, Deputy Director, Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF)

The first panel directly put the spotlight on the Sahel region, the focus region of this year's conference. Insights from Sahel's region's multiple and complex conflicts can shape both German and European approaches towards crisis prevention in the region. The moderator Dr Astrid Irrgang invited the panellists to join in a discussion on what role perceptions of crises play and how these perceptions shape decision-making processes and crisis prevention efforts.

Panellist Dr Gilles Yabi focused on the role of historical perspectives and stated that the current crises in the region could not be isolated from their historical dimension. In his view, the processes of simultaneous state-building, the creation of political systems and economies have to be taken into account. He also put the focus on the issue of inequalities and the limitation of state capacities. He criticized that there are illicit financial flows of as much as 90 Billion US-Dollar leaving the continent every year, generated in natural resource exploitation. According to Maria Klatten, the contributions of different perspectives will enrich the outcome of the conference. Inclusive and open dialogue with local actors and an institutionalized place in the discussion for civil society is critical for successful crisis prevention.

Dr Chukwuemeka Eze named another key issue: the multitude of actors who have different ideas, strategies, objectives, and priorities. In his opinion, it is necessary to see the intertwining of the conflicts in the region and the necessity to create a shared understanding of those crises to form an appropriate and coordinated response. Therefore, the Sahel strategy of the European Union needs to adapt to long-term stabilization and long-term peacebuilding with at least a 10-year perspective. Lastly, Walter Barsch focused on perspectives in Niger. There are local, regional, national crises on multiple levels involving public life, security, health, and the economy. For him, it was a challenge that they have been able to provide strategic advice, but the local capacities to overcome crises are very limited.

The introductory statements were followed by the integrations of questions from the audience. Ms Kathrin Vogler, a member of the German Parliament, stated that migration only became a problem after the European Union considered it one. She asked: "how can we become part of the solution, not the problem?" One of the answers given to this question, was by Dr Yabi, who stated that migration figures show that most migration still happens within Africa and not towards Europe. Many countries, such as Mali or Senegal, have a long history and tradition of migration, and it became the key provider for the economy. He finished by saying: "the political dimension of the question will be hard to change, and it needs a political debate within Europe." Dr Eze advocated for conditioned support from the EU. Suppose the assumption is that all countries have long-term development strategies. In that case, the EU can support the growth of national state institutions, assist in creating a sustainable architecture of peace, support the legislative sector, the diversification of economies, and the reduction of corruption.

In the final round, the panellists were asked to name "hidden beauties" in crisis prevention and peacekeeping. While Maria Klatten focused on institutional strengthening and inclusive approaches with the involvement of youth movements, civil and religious leaders, and women, Dr Gilles Yabi called for the support of resilience of society and the improvement of economies that need to create millions of jobs for the African youth. In his opinion, there is not a single sleeping beauty, but it is necessary to work on all issues simultaneously. According

to Walter Bartsch, it is vital to integrate all countries in the Sahel into a regional approach: “if we are missing one of them, we cannot reach the goal”. Dr Chukwuemeka Eze warned that bilateral relationships between single countries and the EU, sole-central state approaches without the inclusion of civil society would not work.

Workshop 1

Irregular Armed Groups – Privatization of Security?

In the Sahel and West Africa, irregular armed groups, including pro-state militias, are spreading across borders at great speed. This goes hand in hand with the illegal proliferation of small arms. To what extent are German and European approaches to security sector reform and small arms control appropriate and effective? Are the causes of the proliferation of small arms being tackled? Are adjustments to strategies necessary? Representatives of the German Foreign Office, the EU, Nigeria, and Burkina Faso will discuss these issues.

Panellists:

Albrecht von Wittke, Head of Division OR10, Federal Foreign Office; Claudio Gramizzi, Conflict Armament Research, Dr Kennedy Agade Mkutu, US International University Africa, Frederick Amphia, UNDP Liberia, David Lochhead, Small Arms Survey and former SSR expert with MINUSMA

Facilitation:

Prof Dr Andreas Heinemann-Grüder, Member of Advisory Board and BICC

Key messages of the workshop:

1. State-linked militias need to be regulated, formalized, integrated into state security forces instead of keeping them as separate units beyond operational state control.
2. The creation of the regional roadmap in small arms/light weapons control is needed in cooperation between the ECOWAS member states, implementing partners, and international donors. Some of the critical elements for the success are long-term perspectives, ownership by ECOWAS member states, improvement of legislative frameworks, risk assessments, awareness-raising and the involvement of civil society.
3. Comprehensive approach is necessary beyond stockpile management, including the judiciary, governors, parliament, local communities and civil society organizations

Discussion:

In the introduction, facilitator Professor Andreas Heinemann-Grüder stated that there are blurred boundaries between the various irregular armed groups, such as jihadist or ethnic groups and organized crime and that irregular markets of small arms and light weapons further aggravate the problem. With this focus, the workshop will take a look at some of the root causes of state failure and discuss what leverage the European Union and Germany have and what support they can provide in the area of security sector reform and arms and weapon control.

The panellists discussed research findings on the flow and transfer of small arms and light weapons in the Sahel region. This research showed that around half of the captured weapons come from national stockpiles through, for example, battlefield captures or theft. Far fewer weapons come from local black markets and have diverse origins that are not easy to trace, whereas the flow of weapons from Libya has decreased in recent years. Essential is the judicial follow-up after military operations (investigation of missing weapons) which has made one of the critical differences for those countries that have been more successful in dealing with the issue. The discussion then focused on successful examples Germany has supported in the recent years: regional and comprehensive approaches to Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) control, with national, regional and local ownership and individual modules that take different local, historical, and economic parts of the problem into account. Germany can offer expertise with years of experience gained in other contexts, for example in the Balkan region. There are multiple root causes of the deteriorating security situation on the local level. Whereas it is necessary to invest directly into civilian disarmament, it is also crucial to put the focus on development interventions. State institutions need to have adequate capacities, the legal framework has to be sufficient, responses to security threats have to be institutionalized.

Together with the participants, the discussion also took new aspects into account. One topic was the need for the creation of a regional roadmap for small arms and light weapons control in cooperation between the ECOWAS member states, implementing partners, and international donors. Some of the key elements for the success of such a roadmap are a long-term perspective, ownership that lies with the ECOWAS member states, improvement of the legislative framework, risk assessments, awareness-raising, and the involvement of the civil society. A comprehensive approach is necessary beyond stockpile management, including the judiciary, governors, parliament, local communities, and civil society organizations. Another key finding of the workshop was related to state-linked militias. They need to be regulated, formalized, and integrated into state security forces instead of keeping them as separate units beyond functional state control. It will be essential to provide its members with alternative livelihood options and to take expertise from successful regional approaches into account.

Workshop 2

Non-traditional Security Threats: Pandemics & Climate Change

The Covid-19 pandemic exposed how vulnerable economic and social systems are, as only a few countries took adequate precautions to react adequately to global shocks. The coronavirus puts inequalities under a magnifying glass and aggravates the situation of marginalized people, especially in cases of conflict. Other latent non-traditional security threats, like climate change, have been debated for decades, but only a few measures of risk mitigation have been taken. This leads to questions on how well the European Union is positioned to prevent crises from global shocks? How can non-traditional security threats, like pandemics and climate change, be better integrated into crisis prevention? What is needed to close the gap between early warning and early action? Which principles should guide European strategies of crisis prevention?

Panellists:

Dr Susanne Dröge, Senior Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP); Ambassador Hinrich Thölken, Director for Climate and Energy Policy and Digital Transformation, German Foreign Office; Achim Schkade, German Foreign Office; Jennifer Tollmann, Policy Advisor, E3G; Jonas Cleas, European External Action Service

Facilitation:

Dr Kira Vinke, Co-Chair Advisory Board and Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK)

Key messages of the workshop:

1. Multiple non-traditional threats are already occurring simultaneously and need science and fact-based governance.
2. New approaches and additional efforts are necessary; some have already been implemented in recent years. For example, adapting early warning mechanisms like the Preview Tool to better capture climate and health risks, increasing finances and building capacities in environmental peacebuilding, mediation, and the science-policy interface, as well as training personnel to address non-traditional security threats in the EU and UN system.

Discussion:

- Severe economic damages dynamics can trigger a supply crisis, which can, in turn, result in a food crisis. These affect conflict countries the most and can carry impacts on migration dynamics
- Handling the damages became the main focus – not preventing it
- Efforts regarding the nexus pandemics-conflicts and climate-security need to strengthen the ability of societies to deal with shocks (resilient communities)
- Non-traditional security threats are crosscutting issues and have a multiplier effect, all variables and proxy indicators must be combined in an integrated approach (policy coherence as a precondition), and our early warning systems

- Adapting to the “new normal”, as we faced it during Covid-19
- Learning effect: the rapid changes in figures during the Covid-19 crisis showed us the consequences of exponential growth. We can use this awareness for climate change discussions
- Successes so far: UN Climate and Security advisor, Global Foresight assessment, initiated the debate in the UNSC, climate change as a part of daily interaction within the int. bodies
- EU is leading the international discussion, but need to increase early warning and preparedness measures
- Climate change and security issues need to be taken up between EU and AU (as a platform for diplomatic engagement), accountability needs to be stronger in focus
- Capacity building is critical, awareness is there, but it needs more investment in capacities and knowledge
- EU has an impact on building resilience through the recovery fund, but still the need to develop adequate funding strategies. A flexible EU budget to mitigate risks could be an answer
- Climate risk assessment as a strategic compass, development of stress test – scenarios to be able to react to the unimaginable impact
- The reaction to the Covid-19 pandemic showed, drastic changes and measures are possible
- Importance of interlinkages between different departments and ministries to develop political cohesion and secure all relevant actors on board
- Possible synergies of SSR and DRR, but the two communities should be more integrated (still separated funding lines)
- Analysis is joint tasks and should be examples for integrated approaches, including member states, research units, EU commission services, etc. – hence getting everybody on board is challenging and the most significant task for a diplomatic effort
- Climate security mechanisms need to be up scaled, but as well implemented permanently
- Policy coherence is critical, but who wants to coordinate and who will be in charge?
- Mitigation mechanisms are outdated. We need to talk about adaptation instead
- Why are security-related issues delegated mainly to the military instead of civilian resources? Differentiation between security threads labelled to be solved with military means and civilian security problems like food security etc.
- Risk assessment should prevent situations to become relevant for military interventions. We try to avoid situations where the military gets a role.
- Culture of security as a “killer argument”
- Context is essential to understand the very different approaches and to understand how it is likely to happen
- Two significant discussions are essential: 1) the impact of climate change on crisis prevention and 2) the link to a comprehensive approach
- Science and fact-based governance makes a difference, and we should go further from climate to biodiversity (interrelation)
- Money makes a difference, funding should be in line with financial streams, but be careful: “building back better” is very difficult to convey to everybody

Workshop 3

Bringing More Harm than Peace? Safeguards and Operational Procedures for the European Peace Facility

Despite critical opposition from the European and German peacebuilding community, the European Council concluded in July 2020 to establish the European Peace Facility (EPF). The negotiations on the new instrument are ongoing. Designed as an off-budget instrument, the EPF aims at funding the common costs of EU military Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations. The new – and up to five billion Euros strong – EPF (2021–2027) will also allow the EU to supply security actors in unstable environments with arms and ammunition. Alike the German Enable and Enhance Initiative (E2I, “Ertüchtigungsinitiative”), the EPF bridges old-style military assistance approaches with democratic security sector reform aspirations, thereby placing adequate security provision and human security concerns in the centre of their programming. Yet, several recent examples are demonstrating that Western-trained and equipped soldiers do not necessarily contribute to stabilize politically contested regions or to pave the way for peaceful conflict transformation but

sometimes even exacerbate conflicts. How should EPF and E2I programs be designed to contribute to peace-building objectives and reduce harmful effects on human rights? What safeguards could help to ensure that security assistance programs are not escalating conflicts? What oversight and monitoring mechanisms are imperative to guarantee that these programs lead to the desired effects, and prevent unwanted results?

Panellists:

Emily Knowles, Associate Fellow at the Oxford Research Group and former Director of the Remote Warfare Programme; Dr Olivier Guiryanan, Executive Director, BUCOFOR; Tjorven Bellmann, Commissioner for Security Policy, Federal Foreign Office

Facilitation:

Christoph Bongard, German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management

Key messages of the workshop:

Participants agreed on the risks associated with military and security assistance programs (diversion of weapons, fostering corruption, human rights abuses by more effective yet unaccountable troops, reinforcing corrupt systems of governance) and the ensuing importance of safeguards and risk mitigation instruments.

1. The need to adopt safeguards mechanisms are widely shared among the EU member states. But according to one government representative involved in ongoing negotiations, the different strategic cultures in the EU member states (e.g. varying experiences with the conduct of military assistance programs and different constitutional prerequisites), make it a challenging endeavour to find a compromise on the specifics of such safeguards. It is also not yet decided what kind of military equipment and weapons could be purchased and delivered under the EPF provisions.
2. Main concrete policy recommendation: Engaging successfully in SSR and military assistance requires (at least)
 - a. thorough context analysis (also involving perspectives from the people, civil society, and media representatives)
 - b. local ownership (including the involvement of civil society and parliamentarians throughout the entire programming process)
 - c. a focus on both, efficacy (technical aspects) and legitimacy (political aspects) of local security actors and security government structures
 - d. a focus on human security (vs state/elite security)
 - e. Integrated Approach/peacebuilding approach and coordination.

Discussion:

The participants outlined the main challenges for military support and security sector reform in fragile contexts:

- The rapid rotation of advisors and donors, as trust in local security actors is crucial and can only be built up long term.
- Too often, security forces are left behind being “capable but dysfunctional” in terms of administration, accountability, etc.
- As a result, and because of frequent human rights violations, the legitimacy of security forces towards their population declines
- These also threaten to become the weak point of EPF-financed measures.
- “Training does not change behaviour”: What is needed is a fundamental shift in the existing approaches of military assistance – shifting away from the goal of technical capacity building to building long-term personal relationships

- They also pointed out that an integrated approach is crucial for EU engagement in fragile contexts.

- Political processes are a precondition to financing based on the EPF
- There is a necessity of risk awareness associated with any involvement in the security sector and appropriate measures to minimize these risks

The participants discussed an approach to strengthening the security sector because legitimate local security actors are often extremely poorly equipped. The corresponding EU structure, which will manage the EPF as a Foreign Policy Instrument (FPI), has experience with a holistic approach and coordination of EU actions in fragile contexts (due to the previous administration of IcSP).

One participant outlined how military assistance programs in the Sahel region and especially in Chad can and do reinforce systemic corruption and weaken the legitimacy of government security actors towards parliamentary control as well as civil society. The participant fundamentally questioned how democratic SSR approaches could successfully pursue in contexts where the entire governance system and the political economy of the state is built on the objectives of the regime and elite protection and predatory behaviour. In the case of Chad, the entire government elite is composed of former rebellion fighters whose main concern is to preserve the status quo. SSR discussions cannot take place because the media is continuously intimidated and threatened to report about public security concerns and reform needs (“SSR is a taboo in the public discourse”) and the parliament is dysfunctional since 2015. Civil society faces a culture of secrecy in activities in the security sector, which makes critical monitoring much more difficult. How could the international community seriously talk about “local ownership” and “meaningful SSR” in such a context? The discussion also focused on the lack of coordination and even competition between different external actors and governments who provide military assistance, thereby allowing the governing elites to select from the “best offers”. Assistance providers like the European Union have no effective incentives to make local governments deliver on accountability, good governance, and democratic reform.

Concerning best practices, the participants pointed out:

- Training in international humanitarian law is crucial, but it is never sufficient
- that the population is involved in baseline studies with questions such as: What do good security forces mean for you?
- To strengthen local ownership, security forces in the host country need to have a say in program design, while at the same time structural reforms are tackled
- that civil-military relations in the host country (including civil supervision/democratic control over security forces) have to play an overall role in EPF projects

Workshop 4

The Future of Africa: Do strategies respond to challenges and opportunities of the continent?

Scenarios for Africa for the coming ten years identify the activation of traditional identities, the provision of natural resources and growing sales markets for industrialized societies, the politico-economic orientation towards China, rapid demographic growth, and urbanization as long-term driving forces for the continent. The continent’s natural wealth, benefits of the demographic dividend, its diversity, and a fast-growing middle class are a huge potential for development and prosperity. At the same time, the governance capabilities of African states and the social cohesion of African societies are increasingly under pressure by the exploitation of the primary sector, the import of food, scarce resources, and kleptocratic elites. To further tap the potential, investments in governance, education, research and development, digitalization, and social and physical infrastructure will be needed. The German Federal Government, as well as the European Union, have developed specific strategies to revive their partnership with Africa. Do these strategies reflect long-term trends? How coherent are these strategies? How do they respond to challenges and opportunities on the ground? Which resources are available to reach the declared objectives of the Africa strategies?

Panellists:

Dr Jakkie Cilliers, Chairman of the ISS Board of Trustees and Head of African Futures and Innovation Team; Ambassador Robert Dölger, Director for Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel, Federal Foreign Office; Dr Annamarie Sehic, Associate Research Fellow, Politics and International Studies, University of Warwick; Levinia Addae-Mensah, West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

Facilitation:

Melanie Hauenstein, Member of Advisory Board and UNDP

A key message from the workshop:

A forward-looking approach with Africa requires an inclusive and integrated practice that empowers the local level, including civil society, especially women. A well-coordinated multilateral partnership with the continent that takes lessons of the past into account can support Africa in reaching its potential.

Discussion:

The panellists discussed lessons from past health crises and the limits of external support. Looking at past pandemics like HIV or Ebola, we see a lot of similarities, for example, the fact that the transmission took place from animals to humans. As more and more synodic pandemics arise, behaviour change (between humans – nature/animals and humans – humans) is the answer. Developing and waiting for new vaccines, answering each recent health crisis is not the most effective solution. A more institutional/governance response in connection with a global and multinational response is needed, as pandemics do not stop at borders. Responses should use a human security approach rather than focusing on state security aspects only, to ensure the inclusion of minority groups.

The panellists debated insights and conflict dimension of the continent and about overcoming resource curse and the importance of the role of women. They identified the following key lessons from West African Conflicts of the 1990s:

- the need for investments in prevention
- civil society participation is needed
- need for coordination, need for platforms
- role of women has to be taken into account

Although progress has been made (ECOWAS, FRANEC, AG2063, 1925, Marshall Plan, etc.), there are still challenges in implementation. What needs to change? Local agencies have to be meaningfully recognized, local (especially adaptive) capacities have to be identified, local ownership has to be strengthened, partnerships have to be more integrated and inclusive, and take into account local knowledge and expertise. Especially women need to be included more systematically and given a real voice.

Then the discussion turned to recent developments in Sudan in the context of a revived partnership with Africa. The key points on lessons learned presented in the beginning are also applicable to Sudan. The development cooperation in Africa increased massively. The cooperation is based on the wish to work on the African agenda through partnership and multilateralism. Africa policy guidelines (updated in 2018) show a different approach, especially in terms of private sector engagement; managing migration and deepening the relationship with civil society. The second instrument in policymaking is the Federal Government's Guidelines on preventing crises, resolving conflicts building peace. Why did Germany decide to engage in Sudan? Some important points were the establishment of a social movement, the strategic importance of Sudan in the region, the historic opportunity, the multilateral framework including neighbouring countries and the Gulf, and Germany's close relationship with Sudan for over 60 years. During the discussion, the participants identified the speed and effectiveness of implemented actions, rather project-driven than policy-driven approaches, and the involvement of women as lessons learned.

Finally, the panellists turned to challenges and opportunities for the continent, including the effects of the Covid crisis. A forecast predicts that Africa loses eight years of development as a consequence of the Covid crisis. Next to this new challenge, insights were discussed into the question of why the gap in average incomes between Africa and the rest of the world continues to increase, which is also the topic of Dr Jakkie Cilliers's book "Africa First". In eleven scenarios including demographic transition, a revolution in agriculture, getting Africa into manufacturing, the impact on carbon emission, he tries to identify what needs to change to close this gap. He sees one of the most significant potentials in agriculture if there is a real investment. However, a country by country analysis is needed to identify challenges and opportunities further.

Workshop 5

Policy Coherence for Peace in German and European Africa Policy

A comprehensive and coherent approach across the EU has to be located in a shared narrative that is co-owned by involved actors, focus on in-depth knowledge on the ground, continually assessing the impact of the engagement. Analysis from the field to be shared between involved actors of different areas (military, humanitarian, development, peacebuilding) and communicated smartly to senior policymakers. A coherent approach needs to acknowledge the dynamic realities, that are complicated and changing and has, therefore, to include flexibility.

Panellists:

Dr Christine Hackenesch, Head of Programme, German Development Institute; Michael Keating, Executive Director, European Institute for Peace; Philipp M. Goldberg, Director, FES Peace and Security Competence Centre in Dakar, Senegal

Facilitation:

Dr Melanie Coni-Zimmer, Member of Advisory Board, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt; Ginger Schmitz, Member of Advisory Board, German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management

Three Key messages from the workshop:

1. The EU faces a double challenge of addressing urgent short term needs in the Sahel region while at the same time needing to invest in long-term strategic thinking on crisis prevention. Short term needs, of course, dominate. But it is crucial to do both at the same time!
2. Policy coherence has to be rooted in an understanding of local perspectives, politics, and priorities and not just in the headquarters. Constant reality checks are needed to make policies efficient!
3. When thinking about mid- and long term strategies for peacebuilding, civil society actors – especially in the Sahel region – need to be included!

Discussion:

- Focusing on the Consensus for Peace would help to include the Member States directly, and not only talk about strategies at the level of EU institutions. This could help to better include coherence in member states' policies as well.
- Ongoing EU revision of instruments is needed to better coordinate development and humanitarian nexus.
- What is missing so far: A Consensus could shape the EU's objectives and coherence of different instruments.
- The challenge in working out a consensus is to have a common and coherent policy with 27 other member states
- A comprehensive and coherent approach must be located in a shared narrative that is co-owned by actors. It has to include national ownership and a deep understanding of the context (conflict mapping, environmental degradation, climate change, investments, economic development, and so forth), key concepts, and the effect of instruments. A constant reality check is crucial, too. Actors need to assess their impact and footprint and present results to senior policymakers. Good communication is the key to reach decision-makers. These are key prerequisites for coherence.
- Coherence can only be understood in a continuum. It must be dynamic and acknowledge that the realities on the ground are complicated and continuously changing.
- When looking at regional contexts, stronger cooperation with the civil society sector is crucial for long-term effectiveness. In the Sahel region, especially, a much stronger civil society participation in security sector reforms is needed.
- International engagement should not only focus on security aspects in the Sahel region but should include development and growth opportunities.
- Analysis should be shared in real-time on the ground between actors of different field even if operational consequences are different

Documentation Closing Panel

What do Ongoing Conflicts Teach Us for Future EU Crisis Prevention and Peacebuilding?

Panellists:

Ottmar von Holtz, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Civil Crisis Prevention, Conflict Management and Comprehensive Action of the German Bundestag; Stefano Tomat, Director for the Integrated Approach for Security and Peace (ISP), European External Action Service (EEAS); Christine Toetzke, Acting Director General, Directorate-General 4, International Development Policy; 2030 Agenda; Climate, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development; Sonya Reines-Djivanides, Executive Director, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office; Michelle Ndiaye, Former Head of Secretariat, TANA Forum

Facilitation:

Andrew Gilmour, Executive Director, Berghof Foundation

The last panel took the insights from the five workshops into consideration and also focused on additional ideas about what crises teach us. With a focus on the European level of governance, this panel took a closer look at the experiences of different crises, the role of actors on different levels, and the instruments and mechanisms that have proven to play a vital role in preventing crises and building sustainable peace. In his introduction, the moderator Andrew Gilmour criticized the tensions between countries of the Western Alliance, the paralysis in the United Nations Security Council, and the weakness of some of the leaders of major countries, that regard the EU as a threat; whereas for many others the EU is “the last hope”. Germany’s role within the EU is crucial, also in enabling the EU to play a more vital role in crisis prevention and peacebuilding worldwide. No other organization can provide the necessary tools, funds, and expertise like the EU.

Christine Toetzke started the panel discussion by stating that the EU institutions are among the top five donors in the world and a significant portion of the money is going to fragile states already and is slowing down aggravating crisis trends. She also stressed that there are two essential documents on the EU level that are going to frame the development cooperation for the next years. First, the EU Consensus on Development has a well-developed chapter on conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Second, the Post-Cotonou-Agreement is the foundation for the collaboration of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states with the EU. Stefano Tomat named elements of conflict prevention that have good prospects of playing a more prominent role in the future: the whole conflict cycle with a focus on the early action system and supporting dialogue. He stated that “the EU is currently a key mediator in the world” and for example involved in negotiations in Iran, Libya, Yemen and also works as a silent mediator in multiple other conflict settings. Concerning the whole conflict cycle, we must invest more in knowledge management and in learning, such as a coordinated approach to learn from mistakes. Therefore, the future focus should also be on monitoring and evaluation.

Ottmar von Holtz stated that the EU is already a key actor in crisis prevention but needs to improve visibility of where it is spending its money. He also named the annual funding schedule a “burden for many peace projects”, because creating sustainable peace takes time and patience. On the question of which other policy parts play a role in conflict prevention, he identified the importance of improved linkages and a higher coherence between different policy areas. Politicians also need to have a common understanding of “sustainable peace”. Lastly, Ottmar von Holtz created a connection between the institutional side and the need for reform in the EU. He would like to strengthen civil society’s part in decision-making processes and increase the efforts of “the documentation of experiences from the ground”. Sonya Reines-Djivanides added that evaluations also have to include gender analyses, knowledge management, and evaluation of the adaptation of the EU’s actions. All aspects of conflict analyses need to be done on time and include perspectives from civil society organizations to be relevant. She added that other policy areas need to be included: “trade negotiations are also a key part of peacebuilding and conflict prevention.” Michelle Ndiaye discussed the efficiency of European crisis prevention and peacebuilding. The EU should become the leader in a new framing of security, away from state security

towards a focus on human security and the creation of the new security paradigm. New strategies need to be put in place to continuously adapt existing tools, mechanisms, and knowledge that civil society and other actors generate on the ground. The ongoing exchange of learning and the exchange of know-how between the different actors on different levels can create a pathway towards collective solidarity. Also, she presented findings from the current pandemic situation. The Covid-19 Pandemic has “created a window of opportunity, for example in the health sector and has also shown how we are all interconnected.” Stefano Tomat focused on knowledge management and know-how exchange as key instruments and how to link political decision-making processes to the experiences made on the ground. He mentioned the Central African Republic as a positive example where the EU has been able to provide expertise for a complete package, with support for military operations, police, development, security, agriculture, and institutions. He also stressed that even though there is clear evidence of the effectiveness of prevention, there is only limited visibility of those effects. Ottmar von Holtz emphasized the interconnectivity between conflict prevention and sustainable development: “If we achieve the Agenda 2030, it will be a huge contribution to conflict prevention”.

About the Advisory Board

By bringing together expertise on crisis prevention and peacebuilding from both civil society and academia, the Advisory Board assists the Federal Government in these areas. It is appointed for four years and comprises twenty experts from academia, foundations and civil society organizations. It follows the implementation of the Federal Government’s guidelines on “Preventing Crises, Resolving Conflicts, Building Peace” published in 2017. With its work, the Advisory Board fosters constant exchange between the Federal Government and civil society. It can also publish positions on overarching strategic questions. In addition, it may develop its own contributions on various issues.