

Annual Meeting



"Strengthening International Networking"

November 10-12, 2002

Soesterberg, the Netherlands



**Annual Meeting of the European Platform
for Conflict Prevention and Transformation
Theme: “Strengthening International Networking”
November 10-12, 2002, Soesterberg, the Netherlands**



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PROGRAMME

This year's Platform meeting focused on the strengthening of international networking by looking back on five years of largely successful activities through different networks and platforms working on peace building and conflict prevention issues. More importantly, the participants looked towards the future: besides the lessons learned from networking in the past, new and concrete ways of networking, and new forms of partnerships should be sought. In the working groups subjects were elaborated on that have the general interest of several platform partners and on some specific issues – like EU presidencies and the United Nations NGO conference – that are of interest to the entire platform.

Sunday November 10

Arrival and registration

19.00: Dinner and informal meetings.

Monday November 11

- 9.00 - 10.45 Plenary session (Chair: Jan Hoekema, Chair of the board European Centre for Conflict Prevention - ECCP)
Welcome by Paul van Tongeren (Executive Director, ECCP)
1997 – 2002: Looking back on five years European Platform, with:
- Lobby activities – by Kevin Clements (International Alert - IA, UK);
 - National Platforms – by Anne Palm (KATU, Finland);
 - A view from the region – by Dr. Elena Sadovskaya (Center for Conflict Management - CCM, Kazakhstan);
 - Discussion on future of the European Platform / European Centre and election of the new Steering Group. Candidates are Sandra Melone (European Centre for Common Ground) and Paul Eavis (Saferworld)
 - Proposal on membership fee
- 10.45 – 11.15 Coffee break
- 11.15 – 12.00 Plenary session (Chair: Emmanuel Bombande, WANEP, Ghana)
Introduction to the working groups 1-3:
Special Focus:
- The EU Presidencies in 2002–2003 – by Paul Eavis (Saferworld, UK);
- Other Working Groups:*
- Civil Peace Service – by Tim Wallis (Peaceworkers, UK);
 - Website and information exchange – by Lambrecht Wessels (The Network University, the Netherlands).
- 12.30 – 13.30 Lunch
- 13.30 – 15.00 **Working Groups 1-3 – first session**
(2 sessions will take place for each working group)
- Working Group 1: EU presidencies;
 - Working Group 2: Civil Peace Service;
 - Working Group 3: Website and information exchange;
- 15.00 – 15.30 Tea break

- 15.30 – 16.45 **Working Groups 1-3 - second session**
- 17.00 – 18.30 Plenary session (Chair: Paul Eavis)
Reporting and recommendations; with a focus on EU presidencies.
- 19.00 Dinner
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Tuesday November 12

- 9.30 – 10.15 Plenary session (Chair: Elena Sadovskaya, CCM)
Introduction to the working groups 4-6:
Special Focus:
- NGO-conference at the UN on the Role of Civil Society and NGOs in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding – by Paul van Tongeren (ECCP), and Emmanuel Bombande (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding - WANEP, Ghana)
- Other Working Groups:*
- Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) – by Jos de la Haye, (IA);
 - Peace process in Sri Lanka; involvement of civil society actors – by Aruna Dayaratna (Oxfam, Sri Lanka), Jehan Perera, (National Peace Council) and Joe William (CIDA, Sri Lanka)
- Launch of the new book: *Searching for Peace in Central and South Asia.***
- 10.30 – 11.00 Coffee break
- 11.00 – 12.30 **Working Groups 4-6 – first session**
(2 sessions will take place for each working group)
- Working Group 4: NGO conference at the UN on the Role of Civil Society and NGOs in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding;
 - Working Group 5: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment;
 - Working Group 6: Peace Process in Sri Lanka.
- 12.30 – 13.45 Lunch
- 13.45 – 15.15 **Working Groups 4-6 – second session**
- 15.15 – 15.35 Tea break
- 15.35 – 17.00 Plenary sessions (Chair: Anne Palm)
Reporting and recommendations; with a focus on the NGO Conference at the United Nations.
Follow-up.
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Opening Plenary Session

Jan Hoekema, the Chair of the board of the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP), chaired the opening plenary session whose theme was “1997-2002: Looking back on five years of the European Platform”. The session included a welcome by the Director of ECCP, Paul van Tongeren, presentations by three members of the European Platform, a discussion of the future of the Platform including the election of a new Steering Group, and a proposal on a membership fee.

Paul van Tongeren welcomed everyone to the Platform’s annual meeting by calling attention to the fact that the network is becoming stronger. He spoke about ECCP’s aims in the field of conflict prevention such as facilitation and strengthening international networking. He also mentioned that raising the profile of the field is an important aspect of their work as is lobbying and the exchange of information through conferences and a clearinghouse role. Van Tongeren emphasized that there are many opportunities to make creative inroads into concrete projects to achieve the aims needed to prevent the escalation of violent conflict.

Kevin Clements, director of International Alert in the UK, firstly congratulated the network for putting conflict prevention on the European agenda. However, he preferred to focus attention toward the future in his presentation where he sees a major challenge in that the many gains achieved in this field are under threat. His two main concerns were 1) how to deal with fear in an age of terror and 2) how to deal with the problems terrorism is confronting us with.

Kevin Clements spoke strongly on the issue of governments being two faced in that they provide lip service to conflict prevention while investing in military solutions. He was concerned about the domestic sentiment in the United States concerning the possibility of war in Iraq. Saying this was a historic moment in history, Clements said it put a question mark over the achievements of the past 5 years because governments in general still seem to be working in a 19th century fashion in which they use military might to impose their view. He pronounced that this was a critical juncture where the power of force needs to be challenged and halted. “How does Europe say ‘no’ to the U.S. and say ‘yes’ to multilateralism and ... conflict prevention...” because it is the only counter weight. Clements also spoke to the issue of the media’s manipulation of anxiety and that we need to respond to real threats realistically.

Lastly, Clements focused on the idea that terror has explainable causes and we need to find out what’s provoking the terrorists and then see how we can respond to their needs. We need to live and believe that we are part of an interdependent whole, bound together as fellow humans. We need courage and we need to reconceptualize peacebuilding as courage and solidarity so that this network can use creativity versus the forced of destruction.

Anne Palm, Secretary General of KATU in Finland, spoke on the definition of national platforms. Before this, she mentioned her concern that there is total silence on the point of conflict prevention in Iraq. Then, she began to emphasize the importance of national platforms, mentioning that their weak points are that they are very loose networks with no legal basis. When a network is loose not all the members are fully committed and Palm expressed the need to make people more committed. She pointed to the fact that there is much jealousy among NGOs because they feel that they have to compete for the same money, however, it was emphasized that together, the NGOs resources are increasing and that is always good.

Secondly, she brought up the question of conflict prevention and what is meant by this phrase. How can this idea become popular to the public and NGOs? Palm highlighted that in many cases the organizations are already practicing conflict prevention only don’t call it by that name. She mentioned that less than 10 of the EU countries have a national conflict prevention platform and emphasized the importance of making the issue of conflict prevention relevant at the government level. She encouraged the establishment of national platforms underscoring her point that that there is much to gain by joining forces. She said her last point should be focused on because it is important to exchange views and learn from each other’s experiences, and it is essential to avoid overlapping.

Elena Sadovskaya, from the Center for Conflict Management in Kazakhstan, gave the participants a view from her region. She spoke

about the Ferghana Valley as the “hottest zone for conflict”. This region has a population of over 10 million people, roughly 60% from Uzbekistan, 24% from Kyrgyzstan and 16% from Tajikistan. The things that these diasporas have in common are that they come from a common history of authoritative regimes and weak civil societies, however because they come from communist regimes they tend to have more people trained in social support.

Sadovskaya spoke to the issue raised by Palm on the composition of networks and described theirs as loose and open. It includes 70 NGOs in 5 different countries and there is some exchange of information as well as communication and invitations for different events. The network was established in 1990, conflict management and the prevention of violent conflicts is its concrete project. They have governmental and non-governmental dialogue. The network also engages in capacity and confidence building of people and organizations in general, on all sides of conflict.

It is a rather active network that cooperates with International Alert, UNHCR and ECCP. Its active phase was initiated in 1998 and 1998 with NGO needs assessment trips, which identified needs and were also used to share information on resources. The last 5 years they have offered summer school courses as a 3-week University course, aside from their regular workshops and seminars that are held year-round. Through these courses they now have 100 NGO-activists that can lead the seminar themselves, locally, for further dissemination of the information. Another success is that the Network has succeeded in propelling at least 60 University professors in the region to introduce conflict prevention in their curricula. They have also translated 3 volumes worth of conflict prevention and peacebuilding scholars in Russian. Another accomplishment is their directory, which was published in Russian with descriptions and contact information of over

500 organizations from 12 CIS countries and 20 from the continent.



Paul van Tongeren receives the Golden Candle Award

After Elena’s presentation, Berto Jongman, from the Ministry of Defence, presented ECCP’s director with the “Golden Candle Award” from Open Sources Solutions. This organization wanted to recognize ECCP “For their consistent and superior efforts to make open sources of information more readily available to those who deal with conflicts and humanitarian emergencies, to include their surveys of conflict prevention and peacebuilding activities, and their lessons learned. Their web site, www.conflict-prevention.net, is a global resource.”

Paul van Tongeren then continued the session with a discussion on elections and fees. It was decided that Sandra Mellone, Paul Eavis and perhaps someone from CODEP will be part of the Platform Steering Group. It was also agreed that there would be more cooperation within the platform and that the Newsletter would come out on a more regular basis. The agreement on fees was that for organisations with 0-5 staff persons, the fee is €50, if an organization has 6 or more staff persons, the fee is €200.

Working group 1: The EU Presidencies in 2002-2003

Workshop one on the EU presidencies in 2002-2003 started with an introduction held by Paul Eavis, in the plenary session. The introduction presented the progress being made in the field of conflict prevention and the EU the last two years together with the challenges we are facing in the future. The advancements being made so far includes the several steps that have been taken to mainstream conflict prevention and the priorities given to conflict prevention in regional frameworks.

The workshop was lead by Paul Eavis from Saferworld and Kevin Clemens from International Alert.

Despite these advancements several obstacles still exists and a great deal remains to be done to realise the EU's capacity to help to prevent and effectively respond to violent conflict. One of the obstacles is that many of the commitments made still need to be fully implemented from the ACP-EU Cotonou Agreement (June 2000), the EU programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts (June 2001 and the Commission Communication on Conflict Prevention (April 2001). Furthermore, conflict prevention need to be mainstreamed into EU development policy and more EU resources need to be allocated to conflict prevention. Finally there is still a tendency within the EU to react to conflict situations, so that the understanding of conflict prevention tends to remain focused on activities undertaken over the short term to reduce tensions.

The introduction in the plenary session also included six practical steps to put the commitments on conflict prevention into practice. These steps were based on the document entitled "Putting Conflict Prevention into practice: priorities for the Spanish and Danish Presidencies 2002", which was written by Saferworld, International Alert and Intermon Oxfam and produced in association with The European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation and the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO).

The six practical steps include:

1. Target development co-operation to prevent and address violent conflict.
2. Strengthen the EU's role in civilian crisis management. (The military aspect of crisis
3. Control small arms and light weapons.
4. Combat international terrorism and organised crime.
5. Work with the private sector to prevent violent conflict.
6. Reform EU institutions to enhance their capacity for conflict prevention.

For a detailed explanation and discussion of each step please visit: <http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/publl/eupres2002.PDF> or <http://www.saferworld.co.uk/Presidency.htm>

At the end of the introduction questions for working group was presented. These questions were used as a base for the discussion that followed.

Discussion:

In the working group the results, or lack of results, from the Danish presidency was discussed as well as prospects for the Greek and Italian presidencies in 2003. Even though the Copenhagen Summit will take place in December it is not very likely that much progress will be made regarding conflict prevention in the remaining month of the Danish presidency as this summit will focus almost exclusively on agriculture and enlargement issues. The Greek presidency has not yet established their Foreign Policy key areas but greater hope was expressed for the Greek presidency due to Papandreou's early initiatives on, and commitment to, conflict prevention. Furthermore the workshop also included a discussion on what our objectives should be for the next two presidencies and how we should work to reach our objectives.



Paul Eavis highlighting the recommendations of working group 1

Recommendations:

The working groups continued by identifying the key issues to be raised for the coming two presidencies. These included:

1. Focus on continuing mainstreaming and effective implementation of conflict prevention into EU.
2. Monitor impact and effectiveness more proactively and report on these to the European parliament.
3. Enhance EU utilisation of grassroots research and experiences.
4. Ensure that the convention Foreign Policy and military discussions pay attention to conflict prevention.
5. Enhance the conflict prevention capacity on the EU in terms of training and research.
6. Establish if the division of labour between the Council (crisis management) and the commission (conflict prevention) is positive? How can we improve the co-operation and the links?
7. Encourage the development of a common EU position on "terrorism".
8. Encourage the EU to respond more proactively to local agendas e.g. in Africa in a timelier and more effective fashion.
9. Promote utilisation of EU/ACP relationships more to mainstream conflict prevention and encourage more responsible /democratic governance etc (EU/NEPAD/AU)

10. Advance the "instinct" for multilateralism and restrict unilateral impulses (except when these are positive) e.g. in the EU/US relationship.

The biggest challenge for the future is the remaining discrepancy between what the European Commission say that they will do and what they actually do and here the NGOs have a major part to play in monitoring the implementation. This monitoring should lead to some form of written evaluation report or annual assessment that could be feed back to the Council, the Commission and the Parliament. Parallel to this process, more detail research of the impact of EU policy and more grassroots interaction with NGOs in conflict areas should take place By providing clear, frank and honest information in a timely fashion we can establish a reputation of being trustworthy and reliable. Moreover by improving the relationships between Northern and Southern NGOs we can enhance the capacity for NGOs in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean to collaborate with Northern NGOs to lobby and influence EU conflict prevention, development and democratisation initiatives. This kind of partnership would actually be more important than the financial support that is now given as it would enhance Southern NGOs' possibility to impact their own government since these governments often listen more closely to the governments inside the EU than to their own civil society.

Participants:

Sandra Melone	European Centre for Common Ground
Hesta Groenewald	Saferworld
Regine Mehl	German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management
Heike Schneider	EPLO
Elena Sadovskaya	Centre for Conflict Management
Emmanuel Bombande	West African Network for Peacebuilding
Adriana Franco	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Conmany B. Wesseh	Centre for Democratic Empowerment
Paul Eavis	Saferworld
Koenraad Denayer	FDI
Kevin Clements	International Alert
Ernst Guelcher	Green/EFA Group European Parliament
Malin Brenk	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Anne Palm	KATU

Working group 2: the Civil Peace Service

This working group consisted of two presentations on the subject of civil peace service. Tim Wallis gave an outline of the present situation of the civil peace service in the UK, and Helena ter Ellen and Cees Otto commented on their experiences in the Middle East. The participants then held a brainstorming session on the contributions and roles of civil peace service workers, and recommendations to improve their work. Lastly, suggestions were raised for a list of recommendations to the EU presidency.

The workshop was lead by Catherine Barnes

Presentation 1: Tim Wallis on where the civil peace service stands in the UK at the moment.

Tim started out by summarising some principles of the civil peace service:

- 1) the primacy is with the local people. They should be heard and decide what is needed.
 - 2) contribution of outsiders should be very limited. Foreign NGOs should know that they are not part of a grand scheme to bring peace.
 - 3) professionalism and the Do No Harm philosophy are of the utmost importance. There should be high standards of quality control, and people in the conflict zone should agree with the presence of foreign civil peace workers.
 - 4) opportunities should be ensured for people to get the skills and qualifications.
- He then focused on UK work, where set standards and qualifications are also being explored.

The working group then held a brainstorming session focusing on positive experiences of helpful contributions that civil peace workers have made. Examples included the work of Peace Brigades International in Guatemala, where "being there as a foreigner" provided protection for local peace and human rights activists, patrolling and facilitating between the two parties in Hebron and offering a space for both sides to reflect in Glenree. A participant from Sri Lanka stressed that the locals should decide the timing of such initiatives, and that they should not be imposed on them.

It was then concluded that civilian peace forces should try to come up with a framework as a standard for job descriptions. Lastly, three aims were listed as a basis for civilian peace service:

- 1) reduce violence and protect people
- 2) help to open channels of communication
- 3) share experiences and provide people and resources

Presentation 2: Helena ter Ellen and Cees Otto on United Civilians for Peace in the Middle East

Helena and Cees introduced their topic by showing a video of civilian monitoring at roadblocks. They then focused on the problems and tensions concerning the goals of their mandate. In spite of the fact that they want to show solidarity with both sides in this conflict, inform the public at home and make politicians aware of the overall situation, the mistaken idea often exists that their organisation is pro Palestinian. In order to fight this misconception, UCP has changed its mandate so that two observers will be in the region for six months to focus on solidarity issues on both sides, whereas others will go on shorter term, more specific missions. Helena and Cees stressed that it is very important to think hard about your mission and mandate. Do you want to lobby or do you want to work on public awareness? It is important to show that you are not activists. The underlying idea of UCP's campaign was for the Dutch public to feel indignation at the situation in the Middle East, and consequently demand tougher actions from the Dutch government. This, however, turned out to be hardly the case. UCP stressed that it was not their task to do opinion making or formulate solutions, yet, it also acknowledged that it was hard not to fall into this trap. They therefore pointed out that observers need clear media strategy, that they should not underestimate the capacity needed back home and that Holland needs a centre for capacity, training, and expertise.

After this presentation, a brainstorming session was held about contributions and roles of civil peace service workers, and recommendations to improve their work. The following was mentioned:

- create job profiles of required/available expertise, such as the CANADEM and NORDEM rosters, for every European country

- agree on a standard of minimal requirements for people who will be sent out
- set up lines for accountability
- strive for better coordination with local needs
- standardise a code of conduct
- organise a trainer's forum for the development, cooperation and coordination of training
- collect examples of good practice and bad practice and disseminate these stories
- stimulate North-South cooperation
- identify champions of this subject in the EU

Jehan Perera (Sri Lanka) added to this brainstorming session by setting forth some criteria for intervention from the point of view of the recipient society:

1. Make a thorough needs -assessment before going in
2. There should be a preparedness of local civil society to accommodate foreign civil peace workers. In Sri Lanka, for instance, this would merely be in churches, meaning that the visitors would not get a chance to talk to organisations in the North and East of the country
3. The 'hospitality' of the main actors in the conflict should be taken into account. The LTTE, for instance, would not welcome foreign civilian peace workers. Thus, the

organisations should come up with alternatives.

Recommendations

At the end of the session, suggestions were raised for a list of recommendations to the EU presidency:

- The EU should value the need of civil presence and create new budget lines
- Funding should be made available for conflict resolution training for exchange students from conflict zones (it should be noted that the above mentioned recommendations did not receive unanimous approval from the group- it was questioned how sensible is to ask for funding in recommendations.)
- The EU should have a more coherent approach to civilian crisis management. A suggestion could be the establishment of a civilian peace corps by the EU, as a link to our NGO work
- The EU should enter into dialogue with NGOs and civil peace service; how does it link into what is already happening?
- The contact between EU officials and NGOs should be improved, for instance at an annual meeting (it is mentioned that this is already happening in EPLO)

Participants:

Tim Wallis	Peaceworkers UK
Helena ter Ellen	United Civilians for Peace
Cees Otto	United Civilians for Peace
Eric Schuurman	Burger Vredes Teams
Saskia Kouwenberg	VVV Oost- Timor/Maluku info Project
Miek Boltjes	Kreddha: International Peace Council for States, Peoples and Minorities
Peter Meyer Swantée	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Mary Lou Leavitt	Responding to Conflict
Aruna Dayaratna	Field Diplomacy Initiative
Colin Murphy	Glencree Centre for Reconciliation
Eva Smets	Field Diplomacy Initiative
Marianne Wiseman	PeaceWork Network
Anita Mueller	Swiss Peace Foundation
Ed Legaspi	GZO Peace Institute
Jehan Perera	National Peace Council, Sri Lanka
Paul van Tongeren	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Juliette Verhoeven	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Catherine Barnes	Consultant
Rena Ramkay	CPCC
Michael Marriott	Cordaid
Arno Truger	Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution

Working Group 3: Web site and information exchange; Towards Better Divisions of Tasks and Services

The aim of this workshop was to come to an overview of a inventory of what kind of websites there are in the field of conflict prevention, resolution and/or peacebuilding, to see what the gaps, challenges and possibilities are in information exchange and training through the internet, to present and discuss the challenges and opportunities of on-line education and to discuss opportunities of cooperation between organisations and their websites to avoid double work.

The workshop was lead by Lambrecht Wessels, The Network University, the Netherlands

After a short getting-to-know-each-other round, Lambrecht Wessels introduced the subject, and handed out a first inventory of existing websites, related to the field of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and/or peacebuilding. Wessels identified seven different types, with different functions, and presented several examples of each type (see annex).

Discussion

1. Gaps & Needs

The participants expressed the needs of their organisations concerning their presence in the internet community. Some of those needs were:

- technical facilitation; our organisations don't always have the resources to outsource the technical implementation and management of the services they wish to present online;
- a calendar of events and courses. The International Relations and Security Network (<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/conferences/>) and CODEP has made a start on this;
- to pool resources of all online course initiatives;
- a portal that would bring all the online resources together;
- ways to get our services and organisations more known
- A site explaining the ABC of conflict prevention in order to be able to reach out to a broader audience;
- A website as a tool for a public awareness raising campaign;
- Websites with more than just one language (English). There is a great need for information in for example Spanish or French.

2. Online education

Wessels introduced the subject by presenting the online education of the Network University

(TNU). TNU is a centre for collaborative Learning. It's an international network of universities and outside experts. It offers innovative courses

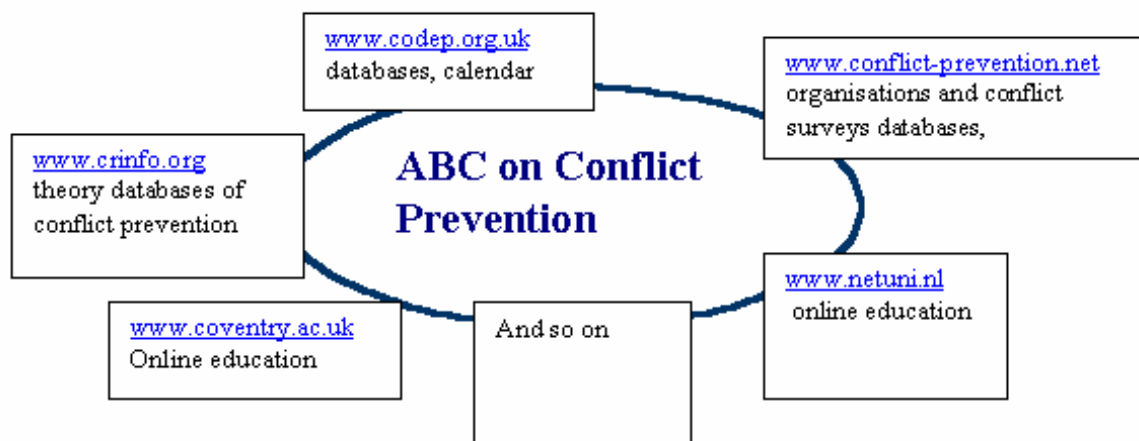
online, addressing the learning needs of a worldwide audience of professionals and students. The aim of the program is to help prepare participants for work in conflict areas or to make their work more effective: by giving them more insight into the processes in conflicts and the roles of different organisations. New Projects are Gender & Conflict, Youth & Conflict, Post Conflict Development and building a website for the ECCP programme "Role of Civil Society and NGOs in the Prevention of Armed Conflict – Towards an International NGO conference at the UN in 2005".

Another example of online education is the Campus for Peace, a project which tries to place information and communications technologies at the service of co-operation, solidarity, literacy, sustainability, humanitarian aid and peace. The Campus for Peace (C4P) is the development co-operation programme of the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) through which the institution plays its role as a co-operation agent, contributing knowledge, resources and technical abilities, and co-ordinating, channelling and supporting the activity of the university community in the field of co-operation and solidarity, according to its principle of an ethnical commitment to society (information taken from the website:

www.campusforpeace.org.

A third example is the online education of Coventry University:

<http://www.coventry.ac.uk/learnonline/learnonline.html>



3. Strengthening networking: cooperation to avoid duplication.

Wessels put forward the idea of creating a “web walk”, a website that allows visitors to “walk around” in a virtual community, in this case the conflict prevention community, showing different elements and products of this FDI stated the need for a solid “yellow pages” of conflict prevention initiatives. ECCP already has a pretty good database to this end on its website, though it is currently not yet working properly. FDI intends to keep insisting to further implement this initiative and has already noticed clear improvements in the workability of the search tool on ECCP’s website (<http://www.conflict-prevention.net>) since the platform meeting.

The workshop also explored the opportunities to set up an online forum and notice-board on conflict prevention. One such forum could be an online discussion forum on the proposed webwalk.

4. Creating a new website:

Several participants in the group expressed their interest in creating a new website. Some suggestions were given to help them:

- Define your target group: who is your audience, who are you aiming at? Tip: try to find new audiences. Most of the current

community. The advantage of such a system is that it is built around a relative small amount of cooperating websites, which makes it easier to find information (in comparison to a general search engine that only provides a high number of hits, without explaining what the site is actually about).

conflict prevention websites are aiming at the same people; the students, academics, NGO people; in short, the higher educated, northern/western people.

- What is the niche in the field? There are already many websites and it can be a disappointment and a waste of time and money when you discover afterwards that someone else already did what you tried to do (and better); Look for partnerships.
- How to get known on the internet? There are so many websites on the internet, how to attract visitors? Besides registering at several search engines, like google, yahoo, altavista and so on, you should also try to find partners/partner-sites that broaden your network. It also helps if your name makes clear what you do and if the *meta-text* (the text appearing on top of each page) describes what you do or want.

Furthermore, the idea was put forward to create a “lessons learned” section or guide book on website building.

Participants:

Lambrechts Wessels	The University Network
Hanne Engelstad	Campus for Peace
Cornelis Verhagen	Civil Peace Teams, Burgervredesteams
Dr. Suwit Laohasiriwong	South-East Asia Conflict Studies Network, University of Thailand
Marc Postelmans	Freelance media consultant
Guido de Graaf Bierbrauwer	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Pieter Schultz	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Berto Jongman	Nederlands Ministerie voor Defensie
Andrew Rigby	Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Coventry University (UK)
Kathleen Armstrong	CODEP
Tore Samuelson	Life and Peace
Bjorn Maes	Field Diplomacy Initiative

Annex working group 3: a first inventory of existing websites related to the field of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and/or peacebuilding

Type	Examples
<p>1. Organisational sites: Just there to specifically and primarily serve to present the Conflict Prevention/Resolution Organisation, basic information</p>	<p>International Alert: www.international-alert.org/ Life and Peace: www.life-peace.org/ SIPRI: www.sipri.org</p>
<p>2. Portals: Websites that serve primarily to filter and present information to its visitors. They refer to other organisations or relevant information on a certain topic.</p>	<p>INCORE, Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity: http://www.incore.ulst.ac.uk/cds/countries/ European Platform on Conflict Prevention and Transformation: www.conflict-prevention.net</p>
<p>3. Resource sites: Websites that provide content for specific target groups. Theory-Academic Background/Area Specific List of Publications</p>	<p>Conflict Research Consortium Conflict Resolution Information Source www.crinfor.org/</p> <p>International Crisis Group www.intl-crisis-group.org/</p> <p>Clingendael www.clingendael.nl</p> <p>ACCORD www.accord.org.za/</p> <p>European Platform on Conflict Prevention and Transformation http://www.conflict-prevention.net/</p> <p>International Alert-Women Building Peace http://www.womenbuildingpeace.org/ www.womenwagingpeace.net/ http://www.kegme.org.gr/</p> <p>Berghof Research Centre for the Constructive Management of Conflict www.berghof-center.org/handbook/index.html</p> <p>Conciliation Resources/Acord UK www.c-r.org/</p> <p>Online journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution http://trininstitute.org/ojpcr/</p> <p>USIP www.usip.org</p> <p>Conflict Prevention Web (Creative Associates International) Michael Lund www.caii-dc.com/ghai/</p>
<p>4. News Sites:</p>	<p>Press Now,</p>

<p>Website providing news. General or specific area/conflict related. Great advantage as regular newsgathering on the subject is poor.</p>	<p>http://www.xs4all.nl/~pressnow/ (Also Training) IWPR, Institute for War and Peace Reporting www.iwpr.net regular news BBC/CNN/Reuters/AFP/</p>
<p>5 Online Education/events: Website that engage in education through the Internet. Either through courses or online debates/events.</p>	<p>Guy and Heidi Burgess,, University of Colorado, Conflict Research Consortium www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/ International Online Training Program On Intractable Conflict www.crinfo.org/</p> <p>-TNU/BRADFORD UNIVERSITY www.netuni.nl www.netuni.nl/demos/tcc</p> <p>-IADC Do it yourself Conflict Management http://iadc.iwa.org/en/</p> <p>www.campusforpeace.org</p> <p>Distance learning Coventry University www.coventry.ac.uk (click on button "learn online")</p>
<p>6. Networking sites: Websites that provide members of a network and often beyond with:</p>	<p>Reliefweb/HRR waar we ook in staan FEWER, EPCP KOFF Swisspeace ISN; www.fsk.ethz.ch www.fewer.org Humanitarian Practice Network http://www.odihpn.org/ ReliefWeb http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf</p>
<p>7: Listserves (email based!) Email lists that send their members relevant information on specific topics or events: trainings, books, jobs. Especially useful for those members with limited internet-access.</p>	<p>CODEP, Conflict Development & Peace Network (CODEP) KOFF/Swisspeace PEACEBUILDING, Conflict Jobs listserver Craig Zelizer</p>

Working Group 4: NGO Conference at the UN on the Role of Civil Society and NGOs in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

The Working Group on the Role of Civil Society and NGOs in the Prevention of Armed Conflict towards an International NGO Conference at the UN had three main intentions. First it was meant to give everybody the chance to give their ideas of what the added value of this NGO conference could be. This was translated into a general objective at the end of the second session. Another point needed to be discussed was the process of this programme and its efficiency in general and in particular the process of regional conferences. The third intention was to discuss the content of the regional conferences, but due to a lack of time this issue could not be dealt with.

The workshop was lead by Emmanuel Bombande, WAMEP, Ghana

During the Plenary Session Paul van Tongeren explained his view on the NGO Conference Programme. According to him the main goals are as presented in the flyer. Documenting and analysing the role of civil society in general and specific actors in particular in the prevention of armed conflict, in order to describe lessons learned and best practices. Another aim was the co-operation between on the one hand civil society and on the other governments and UN. A third aim was strengthening regional co-operation and networks. A fourth aim is enhancing the profile of this field internationally. Paul van Tongeren also explained some of the proceedings of the programme, by suggesting having a campaign with 'War Prevention Works' posters. Inviting partners for the international meeting in six months is something that the ECCP needs to prepare as well as the follow-up to the 6 or 7 governments that are interested in funding the programme. Furthermore he explained the three phases of this programme. As we are in the preparatory phase until June 2003, the regional conferences should be held in 2004 and the final conference at UN in 2005.



Emmanuel Bombande, WANEP

The suggested objective of the programme and this time schedule were part of the debate in the working group later that day, which was presided by Emmanuel Bombande, WANEP, Ghana. The discussion during the first session of the working group mainly focused on the objective of the programme as a whole. Also a related discussion was held about the process of the programme and then in particular the process of preparing for and executing the regional conferences. An intensive discussion took place about the general objective and the added value of the programme. Participants spoke about strengthening regional networking as the most important aim of the programme, whereas the aim of having a final conference at the UN was called in question. In addition to this, it is still not clear how the International Co-ordination Committee and the Regional Steering committees will be established. It is still a question of the role of the ECCP and the responsibilities of the local and regional NGOs and networks. The question of when this should be started is raised as well. In particular Anne Palm, KATU, Finland, and Regine Mehl, German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management, Germany, spoke on their doubts about the time schedule of the programme. They didn't think it was possible to have a final conference at the UN in 2004. Paul explained he already expected the final conference to take place in 2005 and that postponing the process would involve the risk of laying aside the flyer until later. This time schedule is meant to pressure participants to take action and is therefore a strategic manoeuvre.

The second issue raised by Anne Palm and Regine Mehl was the role of the regional conferences in this programme. It seemed to them that a good preparation of and thinking about the regional conferences is of the utmost importance. The process at the regional level

should be decided upon by the regional participants and their ideas and wishes should be incorporated into the programme. Ownership of the programme was seen as a main part of the programme. This point was enforced by the remark of Arno Truger, ASPR, Austria, who said that the general aim of the programme, co-operation between NGOs, UN and governments and IGOs, was to be seen in a different light when regarding the case of Weak States, where the government does not have the ability to govern or is absent as a whole. The relation between NGOs and governments has to be critically evaluated in some cases. Also the competition among regional networks is a point that needs some attention. That the relationship between NGOs and governments could be improved through the use of political individuals is a point raised by Ernst Guelcher, member of the European Green Party. Members of Parliament or party members could be good contact persons to raise the profile of the field and to lobby for the cause. Governments and governmental organisations must thus not be seen as such but could better be seen as compilations of political individuals.

Paul wanted to have meetings with the governments interested, not only about their funding intentions but also about the interaction between NGOs and governments, thus the content of the conferences. It is helpful when a larger and broader like minded group of NGOs and governments could be established. Therefore he wanted information about possible models of interaction when they do exist. This is especially needed since interaction is a condition for funding. We need some proposals or recommendations about how to do this. A last point of issue is the absence of Muslim countries and Arabic world, with which barely any relationships exist and therefore cannot bring us the networks we are trying to establish or strengthen in this programme. A point raised by Saskia Kouwenberg, Maluku Info Project., Netherlands

What becomes clear after the discussion is that most people would like to leave the decision making with the regions themselves. We do need initiators and NGOs which act as catalysts. The ECCP could act as the central co-ordinator, stimulating the sub-regional process. This could solve the dilemma between leaving the final decision with the regions and managing the process at the ECCP in collaboration with its partners. Additionally, we could contact governments

through these local NGOs. NGOs sometimes have reasonably well-established relationships with intergovernmental networks, which exist from governmental representatives, like SADEC and ECOWAS. Arno Truger expressed his doubts about this later during the discussion. He suggested only to focus on NGOs during the programme. The question raised by Mary Lou Leavitt, Responding to Conflict, United Kingdom, "Who is it for, instead of what is it for?", explains this debate.

From the first session it becomes clear that in the first place sub-regional conferences will be held instead of regional ones. The second session focused on the aim of the programme in general. Because a lively debate took place in the second session, some structure was needed to clarify what had been said and to capture it in a scheme. Now, it became even more clear that different opinions about the proceedings of the programme exist. The participants spoke out their ideas about the definition of the diverse concepts. They expressed different interpretations and we have to keep in mind that clarity will remain of importance.

- ◆ First it was stated that everyone recognised and supported ECCP's initiative.
- ◆ Second, the ECCP was endorsed to act as the secretariat of the programme.
- ◆ Third, the preparatory consultations in the sub-regions should be started. Focus should be on consultations on ICC representation and inclusive identification of the needs, thereby setting the agenda
- ◆ Fourth, sub-regional groups or committees need to be established.
- ◆ Fifth, the ICC needs to be established based on nominations from the regions by May or June

Discussion centred around the third issue, it was still unclear what was meant with the ICC. Also the issue about the nomination phase should be made more clear, since this could be approached bottom-up and top-down. The ECCP could start inviting people from the regions to be initiators and participants in the ICC and adjust this list according to the suggestions of the regional organisations, which is a top-down approach. The consultation and nomination could also be done by the regional organisations only (bottom-up). Paul's remark about focusing on and inquiring within networks instead of individual NGOs, could help the process start.

A new objective was formulated along this discussion, which could clarify our decisions about the proceedings of the process. The

objective is 'to develop a common platform for effective action in conflict prevention from the community to the global level'.

Participants:

Kathleen Armstrong	CODEP
Paul Eavis	Saferworld
Ernst Guelcher	Green/EFA Group European Parliament
Saskia Kouwenberg	Maluku Info Project
Suwit Laohasiriwong	SEACSN
Mary Lou Leavitt	Responding to Conflict
Karlijn Leentvaar	Pax Christi
Edgardo P. Legaspi	GZO Peace Institute
Bram van der Lek	Burger Vredes Teams
Regine Mehl	German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management
Colin Murphy	Glencree Centre for Reconciliation
Anne Palm	KATU
Rena Ramkay	CPCC
Arno Truger	Austrian Study Centre for Peace and Conflict Resolution
Conmany B. Wesseh	Centre for Democratic Empowerment
Elena Sadovskaya	Centre for Conflict Management
Paul van Tongeren	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Adriana Franco	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Guido de Graaf Bierbrauwer	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Annelies Heijmans	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Mieke van der Veer	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Emmanuel Bombande	WANEP

Working group 5: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)

Workshop five on Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) started with an introduction held by Koenraad Denayer, in the plenary session. This introduction explained how a consensus for Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCIA)/ Conflict Impact Assessment (CIAS) has developed and that this development provides a good basis for moving forward leaving the methodology discussions behind and focusing on how to implement PCIA/ CIAS. Future challenges lies in developing a way to incorporate this methodology into the project cycle management that the EU currently uses. After this introduction a presentation of the concept of PCIA/CIAS followed in the working group.

The first part of the workshop was lead by Koenraad Denayer from the Field Diplomacy Initiative.

The presentation began with a definition and an explanation of the two concepts or methodologies PCIA (Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment) and CIAS (Conflict Impact Assessment). The two concepts basically refer to the same thing although some people tend to prefer one or the other. A (peace and) conflict impact assessment attempts to assess the mutual impact between an intervention on the one hand and a (potential) conflict environment on the other hand. The intervention can be of any type (humanitarian, development, and investment by an international corporation etc), in any sector (peacebuilding, education, health, economy etc) and at any level (project, programme or policy).

The presentation continued by explaining that PCIA/ CIAS can be carried out at different times in the intervention (before intervention, during or after intervention) and by different individuals e.g. by external consultants, by the implementing agency (for improvement) by stakeholders (for ownership, motivation) or by donors (for satisfaction).

The difference between PCIA / CIAS and “classic evaluation” is that PCIA/CIAS is more specific and in-depth with a focus on the impact, meaning if the conflict environment has changed and if so, if it is due to you. With this methodology it therefore becomes less relevant if the project or programme actually achieved the goals they sat up. The key in this methodology lie in the questions that are asked and these can not be standardised but naturally need to be adopted after each conflict. Normally both open and closed questions are used and each interview last between 2-3 hours.

The presentation also looked more closely into the different phases of PCIA/CIAS.

PCIA/CIAS has three practical phases; it begins with the desk phase in which conflict and project mapping should take place. During this phase questionnaires for in-depth

interviews asserting the conflict impact and the need assessment for the people in the conflict should also be constructed as well as a list of your selected respondents (recipients, potential recipients, observers etc). The selection of the respondents is very important and requires a certain level of trust as one often have to rely on the partners in the field to select well. Although most of this tasks would benefit from being performed in the field this is rarely possible but as soon as one arrives in the field it is important that all of these above tasks are double-checked with all stakeholders in the field, and especially with people outside your project. This is therefore the first task in the field phase. Secondly the interviews should be conducted. Finally there is a reporting phase. All three phases normally takes about 3 months in total but this can vary depending on the project.

Discussion:

After the presentation of PCIA/ CIAS, two main issues were discussed. First there was a discussion of how this PCIA /CIAS methodology can be mainstreamed or institutionalised into e.g. EU policy. EU adopted the project circle management (PCM) methodology in 1992. This methodology has its advantages, as the institutionalised learning and progressive phases lead to accountability and transparency but the use of logical frameworks heavily limits the evaluation. Possible ways to include PCIA/CIAS could be

to train people in the methodology but the risk is that this type of training does not lead to any form of implementation if the PCIA/CIAS is not formally included in the manual/ handbook

Secondly there was a discussion concerning what seems to be a practical dilemma of this methodology. Currently, this methodology is used in a closed and protected way that leaves little or no knowledge in the field where the intervention and the assessment took place. It

was concluded that this dilemma needs to be dealt with in near future, as there is a need for people locally (NGOs, local universities etc.) to be able to build on this assessment so that it does not become an isolated thing performed by outsiders. This could be accomplished through training, transfer of skills to the local level and incorporation of local partners in the process as well as through the development of a two-way sharing process of information.

Media and Conflict

This part of the workshop started out with a presentation of how to work with media in peacebuilding has developed the last years. The understanding of how to work with or through media in conflict areas has increase and more and more organisations and projects now use media as a peacebuilding tool. The definition of media in this context is wider than journalism and it includes a variety of different methods of communication of a message. It is simply a very effective mechanism, since it often reaches a high number of people. In most conflict areas the radio is the preferred media tool since the radio reaches many (also alliterate people) and it provides anonymity that enables people on the radio to speak more freely about taboo issues. Furthermore TV is not only an expensive medium but often also not relevant in most countries.

The second part of the workshop dealt with Media and Conflict and this part was lead by Sandra Melone from the European Centre for Common Ground.

The media can perform several different tasks in peacebuilding. It can, for example, assimilate information –sometimes this is already a step forward to peacebuilding as it might bring understanding of the situation and the key actors. Secondly, media can create lines of communication between different groups and levels. Thirdly it can bring together the connectors of society and fourthly it can provide a place for discussion and bring with it a form of transparency of what is actually going on. Media can also set new agendas or frameworks for conversations. It can question assumptions, launder the language and move the discussions from positing different interests towards joint problemsolving.

The presentation continued by bringing up the fact that most countries have government controlled media and how, subsequently, it can sometimes be hard to receive access to the media for peacebuilding projects. A way out of that dilemma is to choose other types of programmes than news for the peacebuilding project. For example by using less threatening programmes as soaps, drama, theatre or music, access can be granted. However, what type of media and how to use it needs to be established depending on conflict and groups. Whatever type of media intervention is chosen the media message needs to be long-term, repetitive and targeted. Furthermore media

should only be used as one part of the peacebuilding and therefore needs to be closely linked to other efforts (e.g. work with the schoolsystem changing the curricula to tackle issues brought up in the radio programme etc.).

In most conflict areas various types of media interventions can be used where impartial journalism is normally not in place, by providing different types of journalism training and by setting up media infrastructures that can last. Proactive mediabased interventions like targeted campaigning can also be used or intended outcome programming. Intended outcome programming focuses on what will help people to change their views and attitudes to each other and this type of media intervention is frequently used by Search for common ground in several of their projects. Two case studies, the Nashe Maalo project in Macedonia and a video dialogue project from South Africa were here presented. These two casestudies can be found on Search for Common Grounds website:

<http://www.sfcg.org/locdetail.cfm?locus=Macedonia&name=programs&programid=64>,
<http://www.sfcg.org/actdetail.cfm?locus=CGP&name=programs&programid=65&CFID=4650&CFTOKEN=7a9a4833565215f5-53A596CF-FBF3-0C53-AC7A902CC9921710>

Discussion

After the presentation a discussion followed where different dilemmas with media in peacebuilding, especially in relation to impact assessment, were brought up. Media and peacebuilding project, as any other projects, are in their evaluation, haunted with the question of how you measure impact. This is maybe especially hard when one has to measure what impact something a person has heard or seen has had on that person's views or their attitudes.

It was further discussed that in the future we need to move beyond evaluating our own peacebuilding through media initiatives and towards a broader evaluation. Before this broader evaluation can take place the different organisations in the field would also benefit from, and increasing the lessons learned by, sharing the evaluations. While sharing these evaluations we also need to remember that projects or initiatives that has been less successful or total failures can be great learning tools and should therefore not be hidden away but be shared.

The broader evaluation should not just be made for donors or for annual reports but for a holistic picture of what is being done in this field and what impact this has on the conflicts. This, of course, creates a problem with most

donors, which has different criteria and demand results for each project separately.

The field of peacebuilding and media would also benefit from a mainstreaming of both concepts and strategies as different people; organisations and institutions are currently using different names for the same purpose.

Recommendations

Concrete recommendations for the European Platform from both part of this working group were therefore to:

1. Campaign for a larger peacebuilding evaluation initiative
2. Reduce/ alleviate competition between organisations/ NGOs in the field
3. Co-ordinate evaluation efforts
4. Organise a workshop to brainstorm how to assert impact and make the different evaluation methodologies work together.
5. Mainstream criteria for impact assessment (harmonising reporting and evaluation standards) as well as incorporating conflict impact assessment with "classic evaluation".

Participants:

Hesta Groenewald	Saferworld
Hanne Engelstad	Campus for Peace
Marianne Wiseman	Peacework Network
Lisette van der Wel	Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation
Malin Brenk	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Marc Postelmans	Independent media consultant
Joop De Haan	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Berto Jongman	Nederlands Ministerie voor Defensie
Sandra Melone	European Centre for Common Ground
Anita Müller	KOFF Swiss Peace Foundation
Peter Meyer Swantée	European Centre for Conflict Prevention (board)
Oguna Oumuralieva	OSCE High Commissioner National Minorities
Tore Samuelson	Life and Peace
Heike Schneider	European Peace Liaison Office
Koenraad Denayer	Field Diplomacy Initiative
Eva Smets	Field Diplomacy Initiative
Bjorn Maes	Field Diplomacy Initiative

Working group 6: Peace Process in Sri Lanka; involvement of civil society actors

Two working sessions were held. The first one focused on the macro political situation in Sri Lanka and the second emphasized the role of civil society in peacebuilding at the community level.

First working session:

In order to understand the tremendous changes that took place during the last year in Sri Lanka Jehan Perera and Joe William proposed to look back at the root causes of the conflict as well as the ways the conflict was addressed since Sri Lanka's independence. Their detailed introduction underlined that every multiethnic society has to face the risk of conflict and that Sri Lanka is no exception in this matter. But what constitutes the real source of the conflict lies in the form of the Constitution inherited from the British rule. The Westminster model that gives all power to the parliament introduced straightaway inequality between the different ethnic groups. With this constitutional model the Sinhalese who represent almost 75% of the population were assured to keep control of the parliament and automatically dominate Sri Lanka's politics. This political domination gave the Sinhalese society the power of decision on highly sensitive matters. The issue of the official language was one of them in the 1950s. Driven notably by the fear of being outnumbered by the Tamils of South India it was decided that the Sinhala language would be the only official language in Sri Lanka. This decision, regarded as a protection move, had tremendous repercussions for the Tamil community. Another example can be drawn from the young Sinhalese's insurrections in the 1970s which resulted in the imposition of the quota system on the Tamil (quotas in universities, public services and so on). Given the constitutional system the Tamil minority felt excluded and barred from having any real chance of influencing the political evolution.

To describe the way the conflict was dealt with over the last decades Perera discerns four periods:

- From 1956 to 1978 the Tamil problem was seen as a political one, which could be resolved politically. This trend was favoured by the Sinhalese elite but was globally resisted by the masses, not quite ready for change.
- From 1978 to 1994 the view adopted was the one of military repression. The Tamil

resistance was regarded as terrorism and the response was force.

- From 1994 to 2001 the government position evolved. The problem was not only terrorism; it was also political. This analysis of the conflict led the government to adopt a two promises strategy. On the one hand the 'terrorists' should be fought by military means in an attempt to weaken the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam). On the other hand the political dimension of the problem should be addressed through political reform in an effort to gain support from the Tamil population. On both fronts the government under performed. This failure is due mostly to the difficulty in rallying any public support on the Tamil side as long as the war was raging.
- Since December 2001: The picture changed dramatically after a new government was elected. The decision was made to go solely for the political solution. The government accepted the cease-fire the LTTE had proposed and in an unexpected move decided to immediately lift all security barriers held by the army [some participants noted that this didn't happen overnight but gradually]. This bold step was meant to send the message that the military option was over and opened the door to peace.

Discussion: questions and recommendations

The spectacular change brought about by the government is not only the result of the work of an enlightened political leadership. There are also underlying causes that were mentioned in the discussion. One of them was that both sides were badly hurt after decades of conflict and that this war could not be won, because the LTTE could not be suppressed in the north and in the east. In one day of combat there could be as many as a thousand dead. Another cause was the state of collapse of the economy, which made the pursuit of military operations almost unbearable. The new approach of the government consists of dealing with the LTTE as a partner in the north and the east and aims at supporting rather than weakening it.



Joe Williams introducing the Peace Process in Sri Lanka

About the LTTE

This brings the question of the difficulty of negotiating with the LTTE. Over the years this organization became a well-organized military instrument with strong capabilities and important resources, able to conduct large-scale military operations as well as guerilla warfare. It has also consistently eliminated other militant groups among Tamils and has been often denounced for human rights abuses. It was said in the discussion that few Tamils oppose the LTTE not because they like them but because they fear them. However this is now the only negotiator for the Tamil cause and achieving peace imposes to negotiate with them. In the areas controlled by the LTTE the question of the extent of its dominance is posed. These areas are still multiethnic and parts of the society will not accept a total dominance of the LTTE. A concern was also raised regarding the fact that the United States and India still consider the LTTE as a terrorist organization.

About the Peace Process

The question of how far the negotiations between the government and the LTTE will reach was discussed (constitutional change, economic matters). A change in the constitution will require a majority in the parliament. The majority and the opposition need to come together to bring these changes about.

Everyone seemed to agree that achieving a durable peace would be a long and difficult process. The most important thing is for the cease-fire to last. From this starting point, the first priority should be to address the economic situation in the north and the east. The goal of the next round of negotiation in Norway will be for the government to propose to fund the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Tamil areas before moving to other issues.

When discussing who could potentially upset the process the Sri Lankan opposition was mentioned as well as India, which was badly hurt by the LTTE in the past and fear the dominance of the LTTE in the north and east and possible influence in south India. The Muslim community in this regard was seen as a lesser threat. It could fear Tamil domination but the language used by the LTTE during the negotiations is reassuring.

The disarmament issue was recognized as very sensitive. There have not been any disarmament measures at this point and some participants explained that it would be really difficult to ask the LTTE to disarm mainly because they represent 12% of the population against 74% and that their guns brought them to the negotiations.

Another topic raised in the discussion was the issue of prisoners. The Tamils in custody of the government do not constitute as big a problem as in other conflict zones. The matter is negotiated but we can expect that prisoners accused of terrorist acts won't be released. The question of amnesty is also posed and the civil society in Sri Lanka will have to position itself on this matter.

About Civil Society

The 'peace agenda' since the end of hostilities focus on drawing links between the track I and the track II levels. NGO meetings were held and some reports have been given to the government. There were no peace march or other kind of mass demonstrations.

The leadership opened the way for peace but there is a need to bring it at a lower level to the population in order to strengthen the whole process.

Second working session

The session focused mostly on specific initiatives in peacebuilding at the community level. Two projects were described, one lead by Oxfam, the other by Cordaid.

Oxfam project

Aruna Dayaratna described the community exchange program Oxfam is conducting in Sri Lanka. This project aims at building relationship between the different ethnic communities. It involves five partner organizations from different regions of Sri Lanka (south, east and center) and around 45 people took part in the three phases program. The idea was to bring these people together and try to generate dialogue and understanding among them. The first step was meant to give these people the

Then A. Dayaratna presented the film Oxfam made during this exchange program, called "A journey for Hope".

Cordaid project

Michael Marriott described the project Cordaid is conducting at the community level in the north of Sri Lanka. This program seeks to establish harmonious relations between the three communities in small communities. Cordaid is focusing first on the Tamil and Muslim communities. A large number of Muslims were expelled from their homes and villages more than ten years ago. They might return even if this seems difficult. At least they should be recognized as ancient residents and may have rights on some properties. The first stage of Cordaid's program was to bring these people together and give them the opportunity to talk about their problems and their grievances. The results of this in-depth research of three months to identify problems were then analyzed and sectors of concerns

opportunity to know each other. They lived together for 2-3 days and were able to break stereotypes through cultural exchanges. During the second phase the idea was to share with the other community the problems they face in every day life. From this dialogue they were able to identify common concerns and difficulties or differences and could realize the implications of the conflict on others. Then came the attempt of building trust through activities they proposed. It resulted in a joint action in religious places in three villages.

were defined. The results brought some surprises and showed that the first area of concern was the economy and economic growth, followed by infrastructure problems, education, health services, etc. Interesting enough the concern of human rights arrived far behind.

From these results a list of topics was established as a base for discussion. The first three topics are property rights, economic development, and access to public facilities. Then come the ongoing phase of the organization of meetings to address these issues and try to propose solutions.

In regard to these kinds of programs bringing people together, it was suggested to look back at villages where meetings were held and see what has happened and if changes have sustained. Changing in attitudes can occur with this sort of meetings but it can also reverse and changing of behavior is difficult to achieve.

Participants

Jehan Perera	National Peace Council of Sri Lanka
Aruna Dayaratna	Oxfam
Michael Marriott	Cordaid
Catherine Barnes	Consultant
Andrew Rigby	Centre for the Study of Forgiveness and Reconciliation, Coventry University
Gudrun Kramer	Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution
Lambrecht Wessels	The Network University
Miek Boltjes	Kreddha
Emmy Toonen	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Monique Mekenkamp	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Xavier Hediard	European Centre for Conflict Prevention
Joe William	CIDA Sri Lanka

Report of the Closing Plenary Session

Before focusing on closing remarks and final questions after two days of platform meeting, the rapporteurs of the three working groups that had convened over the afternoon reported back to the group.

Chair: Anne Palm, KATU

Working group 4: NGO conference at the United Nations on the role of civil society and NGOs in conflict prevention and peace building. Rapporteur: Guido de Graaf Bierbrauwer

Most of the time of the working group was spent on discussing the process of setting up such a conference. The working group agreed that a compromise should be reached between top-down and bottom-up approaches, that the ECCP will identify the initiators and that the initiators ensure there is a bottom-up approach, and, lastly, that the overall objective should be improved; a platform should be developed that is effective for the community at global level.

Five concrete steps have been brought forward that have "more or less" been endorsed by the group:

- recognition and support of ECCP's initiative
- endorsement of the ECCP as the focal point of the process
- preparation of consultations in the regions has been started. Present focal points are: which organisations should initiate and participate, what are the needs and priorities? Local organisations should also set the agenda and start consultation on the overall coordinating committee. This process should be finished by March 2003.
- establishment of regional/sub-regional committees

After this short presentation, Paul van Tongeren remarks that there have been several preparatory meetings already, and combined with the discussions of today the project is clearly taking shape. An updated newflash, which clearly describes the next steps, shall be issued soon.

Lambrecht Wessels notes that people can further discuss the project on www.conflict-prevention-dialogue.org.

After a question from the audience about involvement of other European and North American organisations, it is explained that although the platform takes the initiative, it is not only members of the platform that are to participate in our project. Greece and Italy, as

future presidents of the European Union, should be especially involved.



From left to right: Koenraad Denayer, Paul van Tongeren, Elena Sadovskaya and Joe Williams

Working group 5: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment. Rapporteur: Bjorn Maes/FDI.

After an introduction about CIAS methods and Project Cycle Management, the working group went on to look at the importance of mainstreaming.

This was followed by a presentation on media and conflict by Sandra Melone from the European Centre for Common Ground. In her presentation, Sandra focused on responsible journalism training, on how to evaluate the impact of the media, and on how one, as a journalist, can operate as a mediator and bring parties around the table.

The group then focused on evaluation methodology. Everyone was asked how their organization does evaluation, and the importance of being open and honest about what has and hasn't worked was stressed.

Working group 6: the peace process in Sri Lanka. Rapporteur: Jehan Perera.

In the first part of the working group, the focus was on the macro, political situation in Sri Lanka. In the second session, two case studies of grassroots involvement were presented. The first was a public opinion survey carried out by Cordaid in rural villages in the north of the island. The second was an Oxfam exchange programme between different

ethnic and religious communities across the island. In conclusion, Mr Perera made a short analysis of the situation in Sri Lanka and the state of the peace process.

At track one level, he concluded, are going better than anticipated, but the main challenge is for this success to permeate downwards to the civil society level. Similarly, civil society input should be included in what is being decided at track one level. This would mean, for instance, a link with Tamil expatriates and the political opposition, as both could be possible political spoilers. Also, a better sense of the needs of the people is needed, so public opinion surveys, such as the one carried out by Oxfam, should be carried out more widely. Lastly, it was concluded and recommended that Sri Lanka needs to learn from other countries in forging linkages between track one and track two.

Evaluation

Before closing the plenary, Anne Palm asked for an evaluation of this platform meeting from the audience. What should be concentrated on next year?

Most of the comments focussed on the War on Terrorism and related issues which are, as some suggested, at the top of our minds but are not being dealt with constructively. It was agreed to keep each other updated on what is happening in this respect so that voices can be shared if organisations so desire.



Emmanuel Bombande (l) and Ernst Guelcher (r)

Another remark from the audience asked why there were no Middle Eastern NGOs invited at the platform meeting. Paul and Tongeren explained that the only reason that there were extra regional participants at this platform meeting was because of preparations for the UN project, and the Sri Lanka forum which was to be held the day after the platform meeting. Apart from this, there are no financial resources to invite extra regional participants and the Middle East was not in the scope of this platform meeting.

Paul van Tongeren closed the session by thanking the participants, and remarked that he considered this to be the most successful platform meeting in five years of ECCP's history, that there was much expertise and time to discuss issues in working groups, that it has been very successful in sharing information and that it was another good opportunity for networking in the field.

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