

GPPAC SUB-REGIONAL PEACEBUILDING ACTION AGENDA OF NORTH CAUCASIAN NGOS

1. Overview.

A first meeting of civil society institutions within the framework of the GPPAC regional preparatory process in the Caucasus was held in Likani, Georgia, in February 2004. Its participants decided to set up a subregional working group to develop further constructive ideas regarding the GPPAC process implementation in the Caucasus. The working group's suggestions should become henceforward an integral part of the all-Caucasian action plan which, in its turn, will be used to develop an international action plan to be presented and discussed at the international conference at the UN.

As part of the implementation of the Caucasian regional preparatory process, the civil society institutions of the eight Southern Russian constituents have developed the North Caucasian Subregional Peacebuilding Action Agenda of Nongovernmental Organizations. A key role in setting up this action agenda was played by the Caucasus Subnetwork of the Working Group on Conflict Management and Prevention (WG).

Therefore, the implementation of the subregional preparatory process has allowed the WG to generalize the peacebuilding experiences developed by civil society institutions in the South of Russia, assess the experiences of interaction between local NGOs and international organizations in the field of peacebuilding, develop specific proposals for improving such interaction as well as to develop a consolidated peacebuilding action agenda of the North Caucasus NGOs.

2. North Caucasus: Brief Context

The North Caucasus is part of the Southern Federal District of the Russian Federation and includes the following ten Southern Russian constituents:

- Rostov Oblast;
- Krasnodar Krai;
- Republic of Adygeia;
- Stavropol Krai;
- Karachai-Cherkess Republic;
- Kabardino-Balkar Republic;
- Republic of North Ossetia-Alania;
- Republic of Ingushetia;
- Chechen Republic;
- Republic of Dagestan.

The North Caucasus occupies 335,000 square kilometers (~2 percent of the territory of the Russian Federation). According to the latest estimates of the Russian State Committee on Statistics, based on the 2002 census for the Russian Federation, the permanent population of the North Caucasian regions is 18919.19 thousand.

The North Caucasus is one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse regions in the Russian Federation. It is populated--mainly its ethnoterritorial entities--by some 40 ethnic communities. These ethnic groups have preserved their distinctive identities, languages, and cultures.

The ethnic composition of the North Caucasus is represented by the following groups: Abazins, Avars, Aguls, Adygs, Azeris, Armenians, Archins, Balkars, Belorussians, Greeks, Dargins, Didois, Jews, Ingushs, Kabardins, Kalmyks, Karachais, Kumyks, Kists, Laks, Lezgins, Nogais, Germans, Ossetians, Russians, Rutuls, Tabasarans, Trukhmen, Ukrainians, Tsakhurs, Circassians, Shapsugs and others.

Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Gregorianism, Catholicism, Judaism, and Buddhism are traditional and predominant faiths in the region. While the majority of North Caucasian peoples are Sunni Muslims (the Hanafi and Shafi'i mazhabs), but the Azeris and some Lezgins are Shia Muslim. The other main religious group is Christian. The Sufi orders or Tariqats dominate in the east of the North Caucasus (Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Dagestan).

Taking into account general trends of social and political developments in the Russian Federation, such complex cultural, religious and ethnic mosaic of the region forms the multidimensional specifics of the North Caucasus. These specifics are determined by the historical and political background of the region, its ethnopolitical and ethnocultural features. The common Russian social and economic problems in this region are especially acute and have been aggravated by a set of particular regional problems associated with:

- The historical experience of ethnic and ethnopolitical contradictions and conflicts;
- The repeated changes in the administrative and territorial divisions of the North Caucasian constituents in the 20th century;
- The historical legacy of repression and deportations of some peoples and the Cossacks;
- The ineffectiveness of the present-day system of regional and municipal administration as well as wide-spread corruption;
- The ethnic tensions and territorial claims of the North Caucasian peoples;
- The intensified migration flows and dramatic changes in ethnic composition of the population;
- The out-migration of the Russian and "Russian-speaking" population from the region, and in particular, from the national republics;
- The large amount of arms in the hands of the population;
- The consequences of former armed conflicts and the on-going instability in the Chechen Republic;
- Increased activity of armed terrorist groups and illegal paramilitary units and so on.

When focusing on the conflict factors, which undermine the stability in specific regions of Southern Russia, it is important to note the following:

Stavropol Krai:

Local Specifics: the cultural, religious and ethnic mosaic of the Stavropol Krai is determined by the fact that it borders all the entities of the North Caucasus, excluding Adygeia and Ingushetia.

Key Factors of Conflict: The Stavropol Krai has seen all the potential and realized conflict factors which are common for the neighboring subregions of the North Caucasus. Many of them are determined by protracted tensions in the neighboring territories, which destabilize the situation in the Stavropol Krai and increase the potential for violence. The situation in the Caucasus Mineral Waters area and in the eastern part of the Stavropol Krai can be considered the most conflict-prone. The most important are the following conflict

factors: interethnic and inter-faith tensions among various communities; intra-faith contradictions among the followers of traditional Islam as well as between them and the followers of radical Islamic schools; dramatic changes in ethnic composition of the population in some areas of the Stavropol Krai; outmigration of the Russians and “Russian-speaking” population; activity of terrorist groups.

Karachai-Cherkessia:

Local Specifics: five titular ethnic groups with two of them (the Karachai and Circassians) having an experience of ethnic confrontation.

Key Factors of Conflict: the power struggle between the major ethnic groups and the use of ethnic tensions as a source of ethnic mobilization in this struggle; dramatic changes in ethnic composition of the population that has an impact on the ethno-social status and comfort of the peoples inhabiting the country.

Besides that, the situation in Karachai-Cherkessia contributes to the instability in the neighboring territories, including Kabardino-Balkaria, Adygeia, and the Caucasian Mineral Waters in the Stavropol Krai. It can be explained by the fact that many representatives of the same ethnic groups inhabit these and other sub-regions of the Russian South.

Kabardino-Balkaria:

Local Specifics: a relatively low level of ethnic tensions.

Key Factors of Conflict: increasing confrontation between the authorities and followers of traditional Islam, on the one hand, and radical Wahabbi fundamentalists, on the other hand.

North Ossetia-Alania:

Local Specifics: Unsettled consequences of the 1992 conflict in the Prigorodny district¹ and close ethnic, cultural, political, and economic ties with South Ossetia.

Key Factors of Conflict: remaining tensions in the area that suffered most during the Ossetian-Ingush conflict; consequences of the terrorist seizure of a school in the town of Beslan; remaining tensions in South Ossetia.

Ingushetia:

Local Specifics: relative monoethnicity, the unsettled consequences of the Ossetian-Ingush conflict in the Prigorodny Rayon of North Ossetia.

Key Factors of Conflict: the power struggle between major clans; the on-going violent conflict in Chechnya and its negative impact, a large number of IDP's from Chechnya and the Prigorodny Rayon of North Ossetia, increasing confrontation within the Vaynakh community (between the Ingush and Chechens), the on-going tensions in the Prigorodny Rayon of North Ossetia; the rise of radical Islamist ideology and its organized followers.

¹ A five-day war between Ossetian and Ingush paramilitary units.

Chechnya:

Local Specifics: the violent conflict, which has been going on for more than a decade.

Key Factors of Conflict: massive violations of human rights and freedoms by all conflicting parties; destruction of economic and social infrastructure, increasing confrontation within the Chechen community; radicalization of a considerable part of the population; wide-spread corruption; terrorist activities and their external support; the rise of radical Islamic fundamentalism.

Dagestan:

Local Specifics: polyethnic composition with over 40 ethnic groups identified.

Key Factors of Conflict: the struggle for power and resource allocation among different ethnic groups; the consequences of the terrorist raids from Chechnya in 1999; internal migration of the mountain population to the lowlands; the aggravating relations between different faith communities: the ideological split within the Sufi brotherhoods which are divided into two contesting Tariqats - the Naqshbandiya and the Qadiriya as well as the growing tension between the Sufi and Wahabbi Muslims; the increase in the activity of terrorist groups and human rights violations on the part of police and other pro-government forces.

3. UN System Agencies in the North Caucasus

Ethnocultural and ethno-political problems in the North Caucasus draw much attention of Russian and international governmental and nongovernmental agencies and organizations.

The agencies of the UN system and their aid programs aimed at assisting those in need, displaced persons and other groups of population who suffered in violent conflicts are extremely important. It should be noted that the UN system agencies and other international organizations significantly help ameliorate the current humanitarian situation in such fields as nutrition, healthcare, education, psychological rehabilitation, water supply, etc. However, although these aid programs focus on solving the current humanitarian problems and help ameliorate the situation, it is generally recognized that they have not done as much in addressing the root causes of instability in the region.

The agencies of the UN system focus their activities primarily on the Chechen Republic and the Republic of Ingushetia as these two entities have the most urgent humanitarian needs to be addressed. However, this selectivity leaves other conflict-prone regions of the South of Russia largely beyond the reach of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation programs.

Prospects for cooperation between local NGOs and agencies of the United Nations system in the field of peacebuilding:

The maintenance of peace and security in our interdependent world requires wider approaches and should be more inclusive. It cannot be reduced to the powers of the UN

Security Council and governments. This process should engage other actors in the field of peacebuilding, and first of all, nongovernmental organizations.

Nongovernmental organizations are efficient players in preventive diplomacy. They possess important resources of early warning and are able to draw attention of governments and international organizations to conflicts. The mobilization of the attention of the public at large, governments and international organizations to the acute challenges of our time by NGOs is a well-established element of contemporary international and domestic political relations.

The ability of civil society institutions to find new and constructive ways to mitigate the consequences of ethnic, inter-faith and territorial conflicts and stabilize situations is highly valued by many actors involved in ethnopolitical processes. This contribution to the development of an integral system for managing social relations, where ethnocultural and ethnopolitical components have significant roles, is especially important today. And the constructive interaction of government bodies with civil society institutions assumes ever-greater importance in this respect.

Recognizing the particular importance of the agencies of the UN system, we should admit, nevertheless, that their activities toward human security priorities need to be considerably revised and redirected in the North Caucasus. It is necessary to develop new ways of working in conflict where elimination of conflict causes and post-conflict reconstruction should be better addressed along with the mitigation of the aftermath of conflicts.

The analysis of peacebuilding experiences in the North Caucasus demonstrates that the UN system agencies operating in the region should assist in developing an effective system for regulating and stabilizing ethnopolitical and ethnocultural tensions and for rapid response to the aggravation of the interethnic relations. This system should provide for:

- The development of sustainable and efficient ways of interaction among actors involved in peacebuilding initiatives;
- The monitoring of the situation in conflict regions in order to define priorities for action;
- The identification of organizations and individuals who could take part in the development and implementation of peacebuilding projects;
- The development and implementation of targeted activities aimed at strengthening mutual understanding and cooperation, mitigating tensions, preventing violent conflicts and overcoming their consequences;
- The development of social partnership among local NGOs and activists involved in peacebuilding activities and local and regional authorities, research centers, individual researchers, Russian and international NGOs;
- The engagement of international and donor organizations in the development of peacebuilding policies and in implementing peacebuilding programs in the region;
- The assessment of the results of peacebuilding initiatives, which are implemented in the region, and the development of constructive follow-up work.

When defining and developing priorities for action in the North Caucasus, the agencies of the UN system should hold regular consultations with actors involved in ethnopolitical processes in the South of Russia, including local NGOs which are engaged in conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding activities.

4. Action priorities:

Taking into account the available resources and experience of ethnopolitical actors in the South of Russia, the situation there and the complexity of existing problems, legislation in force and other factors, the participants involved in the development of the consolidated peacebuilding agenda believe that efficient cooperation between NGOs and the UN system agencies in the North Caucasus should focus on the following thematic and regional priorities.

Thematic Priorities:

Monitoring, early warning and early response

There are numerous applied research centers and networks working in the Russian Federation. However, their activities suffer from poor coordination. The findings of their monitoring activities are usually based on expert opinions and lack systemic and in-depth factual and sociological studies that could lead to an impartial assessment of the situation in the region. Besides, many monitors are biased themselves. The biggest problem is that the monitors can identify the existing challenges, but rarely suggest specific steps to address them.

Things to change/practical recommendations:

- Hold regular (twice a year at least) consultations with representatives of nongovernmental organizations, which work in conflict regions in order to improve monitoring activities in conflict and conflict-prone regions;
- Actively use and support NGOs and NGO networks in monitoring activities, sponsor joint missions of civil activists to conflict regions;
- Enlist the services of specialists in facilitation in order to assist the expert community in developing common assessments and proposals;
- Organize and conduct round tables, consultations, etc. aimed toward developing specific mechanisms to implement recommendations rather than toward simply making general recommendations themselves;
- Set up rapid response machinery based on the findings of monitors and provide efficient and quick assistance to civil society institutions involved in tension reduction activities, reconciliation, and development of interethnic dialogue in conflict-prone regions;
- Expand the distribution of developed recommendations to reach authorities and civil society institutions at every level;
- Hold mutual consultations of the regional authorities, expert community and civil society organizations under the auspices of UN agencies.

Developing tolerance, improving interethnic relations through education, culture, sports.

The existing system of pre-school, school and additional education does not utilize or promote with due attention the elements of ethnic and cultural convergence which are extremely important for the North Caucasus regions. This problem is bound up not only with the present crisis in public education, but to a greater extent with the prevailing underestimation by teachers of their possibilities for the positive education of young people and insufficient professional level of teachers as peacemakers. A large number of young people who do not have secondary education are a “nutrient medium” for both criminal groups and extremist demagogues. The practice of ethnically segregated schools in the areas of compact settlement of different ethnic groups, increasing influence of radical doctrines and engagement of young people in various extremist groups, limited access to interethnic cultural heritage of the region contributes to intolerance, aggression and ethnic tensions in the region.

Things to change/practical recommendations:

- Support the development of educational programs for schoolteachers aimed at acquiring the principles and skills of peacebuilding, tolerance and traditions of ethnopedagogics as well as their further introduction into the curricula of pedagogical educational institutions and training courses for teachers;
- Support the work of teacher trainers and school psychologists who promote ideas of peace and tolerance;
- Organize correction classes and develop special secondary school programs for children and young people who were unable to finish school because of the conflicts in the region;
- Develop and sponsor the work of interethnic cultural centers;
- Support programs of interethnic and intercultural cooperation of the peoples of the North Caucasus and engage NGOs, national and cultural organizations, and authorities in their preparation;
- Engage NGOs and authorities in consolidated projects that address the issues of youth policy;
- Sponsor programs of social and psychological rehabilitation for the population who suffered from conflicts, terrorist attacks and ethnic confrontation;
- Implement sports, cultural and other initiatives aimed at mitigating tensions between IDP’s refugees, re-settlers and the receiving communities.

Developing inter- and intra-faith dialogue, tolerance and mutual respect among various religious groups and preventing extremism in this field

The development of inter- and intra-faith dialogue has an important role to play in achieving regional stability. The traditionally active influence of the Islamic clergy on secular authorities, in particular, at the local and regional levels, misuse of authority for personal gain by many clergymen and officials, increasing tensions within Muslim communities where the ethnic factor is important, contradictions and conflicts among different trends in Islam, increasing marginalization and loss of identity among the

population—all these factors create a breeding ground for various extremist ideologies and doctrines in the North Caucasus region.

Things to change/practical recommendations:

- Clearly separate powers of secular and spiritual authorities and establish a principle of mutual non-interference;
- Strengthen the rule of law and accountability of government bodies;
- Improve living standards of the population, restore the integrated socioeconomic and cultural space of the North Caucasus;
- Support programs aimed at creating new jobs, developing educational and cultural activities and organize sports and cultural competitions at the local, regional and interregional levels;
- De-politicize the contradictions between different religious movements and reduce them to theological debates and discussions;
- Sponsor programs, which are implemented by local NGOs and are aimed at establishing inter- and intra-faith dialogue in order to fill the present spiritual vacuum with positive religious, cultural and ideological values; support traditional culture and ethics;
- Strengthen inter-sector cooperation between NGOs and authorities as a major resource for administrative reform and prevention of corruption;
- Support and sponsor initiatives aimed at studying and applying the international experience in inter- and intra-faith conflict resolution; provide training for members of local and regional NGOs in this field.

Developing civil society in the conflict regions

For the past 10-15 years, civil society organizations in the region have gone a long way to what they have become today. They were institutionalized and developed in a very complex social and political environment. Taking shape in the dramatic period of transition and being both the object and subject of transitional processes, the civil society institutions reflect in full measure the predominant trends in ethnopolitical and ethnocultural development of society in the North Caucasus. Therefore, it is possible to present the following typology of the civil society institutions operating in the North Caucasian region:

- “Classical” (Western-type) civil society institutions which were set up by grassroots initiatives to consider a subject of public importance;
- Quasi-civil society institutions which were set up by the initiative of the ruling elite and encouraged to pursue its interests;
- “Ethnic” civil society institutions which were set up by grassroots initiatives, but pursuing interests of a particular ethnic group.

Things to change/practical recommendations:

- Assist efforts aimed at developing NGO cooperation through the unifying associations/congresses/centers; support networking;
- Prevent the transformation of self-identities of ethnic groups into nationalistic claims;

- Sponsor applied research of folk traditions, culture and traditional elements of social relations, which can be used for the development of civil society;
- Develop a framework for interaction between ethnic associations and other civil society organizations;
- Sponsor programs aimed at improving interaction between NGOs and authorities.

Developing cooperation of international organizations and local NGOs

The analysis of programs of international organizations in the North Caucasus has shown that they are mainly engaged in humanitarian and relief activities. As a rule, they operate in the regions, which suffered or still suffer from conflict and are given much prominence by the media. The regions of potential conflicts are, in many cases, outside of their scope of attention. International organizations operating in the North Caucasian region seem to engage only a fairly narrow circle of NGOs in their programs and very often they ignore the potential cooperation from many local NGOs which have long experience of constructive work at the grassroots level. Limited access to information about the international organizations operating in the region (their programs and reports of their activities, etc), extremely specialized issues of their cooperation with local NGOs, the lack of flexibility and practical assistance to independent and young NGOs makes it difficult for international organizations to adequately assess the actual needs of the region.

Things to change/practical recommendations:

- Set up an early warning and early response system to monitor the situation in every sub-region of the North Caucasus;
- Set up local information networks which could be easily accessed by local NGOs and which should share information of the realized and planned events, programs and projects that are implemented in the region;
- More actively engage local NGO employees and volunteers in volunteer activities, education and internships in the region;
- Provide for feedback while working with the local NGOs so that international organizations may better assess the needs of the region;
- Develop programs of small grants and other programs and projects aimed at sponsoring and developing new NGOs.

Resolving the problems of the repressed peoples who were subject to the Stalin's deportations in the 1940s

One of the most urgent but complicated legal and ethical challenges is to restore the historical justice with respect to the "punished" peoples. There is a Federal Law and many local acts to address this issue, a number of bodies have been established and large amounts of money were allotted to implement the provisions of these acts. However, the local acts and the Federal Law remain largely declarations because the implementation of some of their provisions can aggravate interethnic relations in many subregions of the Russian South. A stumbling block of the Law is the provision that stipulates the return of land and territories to the peoples who were deported en masse to Central Asia by Stalin in the 1940s. The problem is that their lands had been occupied by other ethnic groups and/or incorporated into other administrative and territorial entities. The situation is

stalemated as the implementation of the Law can sharply destabilize the situation in many subregions of the North Caucasus while the *status quo* leads to friction between those who returned and those who remained. The most difficult situation in this regard is observed in the Prigorodny district (North Ossetia-Alania) and the Novolakskiy district in Dagestan².

Things to change/practical recommendations:

- Support special programs aimed at studying and finding nonviolent solutions to the problems of the “punished” peoples and those communities, which had been involved in these problems;
- Include the issue of the “punished” peoples who were subject to mass deportations under Stalin in the UN agenda;
- Support the implementation of the resolution on this issue adopted by the Third Congress of the Peoples of Dagestan and launch a comprehensive research of the process and ways to implement this resolution.

Sub-regional Priorities:

Karachai-Cherkess Republic:

Support for the in-depth monitoring of the situation in the Republic in order to make specific recommendations and develop practical ways to reduce interethnic tensions. Special measures are needed to develop systemic cooperation among ethnic public associations (“ethnic movements”) in the Republic and between them and local and regional authorities. This cooperation should ensure the engagement of civil society organizations, cultural and educational institutions as well as various ethnic communities from every administrative and territorial unit of the Republic.

Kabardino-Balkar Republic:

Development of initiatives aimed at: actively engaging young people in social and political life in the Republic; promoting ideas of tolerance and nonviolence among young people; creating new opportunities for young people in education and employment. Such initiatives are crucial in order to decrease the influence of radical religious cults and extremist ideologies on the Kabardino-Balkar youth.

The Caucasian Mineral Waters (CMW) Area in the Stavropol Krai:

Support for initiatives aimed at: promoting and developing positive experience of interethnic cooperation; reducing tensions between the receiving community and migrants (based on the programs of sociopolitical and socioeconomic integration of the migrants in the Stavropol Krai); and using resources of civil society institutions in the CMW as a basis for the promotion and replication of the positive experience in interethnic cooperation in the neighboring territories, including Karachai-Cherkessia and Kabardino-Balkaria.

² The Novolakskiy district was formed in 1944 instead of the former Aukhovskiy district. When Akin Chechens were evicted from the Aukhovskiy district, several villages of the disbanded Aukhovskiy district were incorporated into the neighboring districts of Dagestan and many Lak families were resettled into this territory.

Prigorodny Rayon (North Ossetia):

Support for peacebuilding programs aimed at eventual integration (in a number of years) of ethnically segregated education, when Ossetian and Ingush children have to go to different schools; develop cooperation among journalists, the media and educational institutions of North Ossetia and Ingushetia.

Chechen Republic:

Of key importance for regional stability are programs, aimed to prevent human rights violations, to help overcome not only physical, but psychological consequences of violence, assisting reconciliation and reintegration of the local population into mainstream society.

One important practical issue is the development of cooperation among governmental and nongovernmental organizations, various professional, ethnic, social and age groups operating on the both sides of the administrative border of Chechnya and other Russian federal constituents (including Ingushetia, North Ossetia, the Stavropol Krai, and Dagestan). The development of grassroots social and economic ties among the neighboring subregions of the Russian South as an important component of the post-conflict reconstruction in the Chechen Republic.

Also important for enhancing stability in Chechnya is the development of direct cooperation of primary and secondary schools and other educational institutions in the Chechen Republic with corresponding institutions in other regions of the Russian Federation.

Republic of Dagestan:

The most important action priority in the Republic of Dagestan is the development of civil initiatives aimed at:

- Developing interethnic cooperation. It is particularly important that these initiatives use both the innovative and traditional (“people’s diplomacy”) methods and are aimed at regulating traditional problematic aspects of ethnic relations within Dagestan as well as the relations between the migrant communities from the highlands and Chechen IDP’s and the receiving communities in the lowlands;
- Reducing intra-faith tensions within the local Sufism as well as between the Sufi and Wahabbi Muslims;
- Developing cooperation among various ethnic, territorial, professional and age groups from the Republic of Dagestan and the Chechen Republic along the administrative border of the two entities.

5. Overall Recommendations:

To Local and Regional Authorities

It is essential to support the development of nongovernmental organizations in the North Caucasus, which focus their activities on conflict prevention and management.

Effective peacebuilding methods developed by the nongovernmental organizations should be incorporated into the regional and local programs and action plans by relevant authorities.

Special measures may be needed to develop and strengthen civil control over the regional and local authorities as one of the ways to fight back-door policies and corruption.

To the Agencies of the UN System

It is important to begin developing a specialized UN agency dealing with conflict prevention and management on a regional and local level, which will interact directly with local communities and civil society institutions in conflict regions.

The various agencies comprising the UN system in the North Caucasus should introduce into practice consolidated appeals to donor states and organizations to support joint actions by nongovernmental organizations and international institutions aimed at mitigating tensions in the regions of ongoing and potential violent conflicts (following the examples of consolidated inter-agency humanitarian appeals).

Greater priority needs to be given to peacebuilding activities, mitigation of ethnic tensions and reintegration of marginalized groups within the consolidated humanitarian appeals.

It is particularly important to hold regular consultations with key stakeholders to discuss the ethnopolitical processes in the Russian South and to include local NGOs involved in conflict prevention, management and peacebuilding activities into such consultations.

It is valuable to assist the establishment of closer working relations among NGOs from conflict regions of the post-Soviet area as well as to improve their engagement with activities of relevant international organizations.

It is equally important to support the work of peacebuilding networks of nongovernmental organizations, their joint monitoring missions aimed at identifying conflict factors and ways to mitigate ethnic tensions effectively.

International organizations may support forums and other events that would improve interaction between civil society organizations and local and regional authorities.

Since 2000 the North Caucasus was one of the areas addressed through the Consolidated Appeal process (CAP), which helped address the humanitarian consequences of violent conflicts and natural disasters. In 2005 the Russian government announced that there is no more need for such a CAP for 2006. However, we hope that the region could become a pilot area for developing a UN – coordinated appeal for the support of programs, focused on of social cohesion, reducing tensions, supporting long-term recovery and strengthening regional stability. This would generate valuable experience of developing integrated conflict management and preventive strategies, based on local initiatives, and will allow testing such new approaches to the problems of conflict regions. Local CSO's are prepared to play a key role in the development of such a document. A document, containing a review of possible NGO strategies and action plans has been prepared for this purpose within the regional GPPAC process.