

Policy Brief Series

The European Union and Peacebuilding

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**Project: “Rising Powers and Innovative Approaches to
Peacebuilding”**

www.RisingPowersandPeacebuilding.org



About the Project

The Rising Powers and Peacebuilding project seeks to address an important question that has not yet been thoroughly researched: **what are the new approaches that rising powers have taken to peacebuilding, how do they differ from those of traditional powers and multilateral institutions, and what lessons can be learned from these new approaches?**

The policy briefs in this series provide a baseline on the roles of rising powers and their affiliated regional organizations in peacebuilding. To this point, little research has been conducted on the substance and impact of peacebuilding activities carried out by rising powers. This project seeks to address this gap in the research by providing a structured, critical analysis of the values, content and impact of recent peacebuilding initiatives of rising powers, comparing them to one another and to approaches by Western donors and international organizations. The project also aims to offer new theoretical claims about the role of the global South in peacebuilding, rooted in insightful empirical work (on Somalia, Afghanistan and Myanmar and on specific non-Western actors), and to make key policy audiences aware of alternative approaches and their empirical records and theoretical underpinnings (which may vary among values, global/regional power aspirations, bureaucratic approaches).

The project partners will also produce case studies on the role of rising powers in peacebuilding, and include: ACCORD (an NGO based in South Africa), the Istanbul Policy Center (IPC), the United Service Institution of India (USI), American University's School of International Service (SIS), CSIS-Jakarta, and the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). The project is funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, American University, and NUPI.

The European Union and Peacebuilding

Introduction

Alongside its role as the biggest donor in the world, the European Union (EU) has become increasingly committed to and engaged in peacebuilding around the world. In addition to deploying civilian and military missions in areas challenged by violent conflict, it increasingly emphasises conflict prevention and peacebuilding in its development assistance, working with the UN, regional organizations and other partners.

When discussing EU peacebuilding, it is useful to distinguish between intra-Europe efforts and efforts made beyond the EU's borders. Within its borders and in its immediate neighbourhood, the creation and enlargement of the EU can be seen as a project of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in itself. Here, integration measures, membership aspirations and conditionality are key ingredients. This role as a promotor of peace on the continent is central to the EU's self-image, and is evident in, for example, in the European Security Strategy and the Lisbon treaty.¹ In addition, the EU is involved in efforts to promote and preserve peace beyond its borders – in nearby regions, in areas where member states have interests or where conflict issues are particularly pressing, as well as in locations where other peacebuilding actors such as the UN and AU have requested assistance. It is this latter aspect of EU peacebuilding that is the focus of this paper.

The EU does not operate with an explicit peacebuilding concept, and it has not formulated a peacebuilding strategy. Nevertheless, the organisation takes a holistic view when dealing with conflict, and its usage of the term peacebuilding 'tends to be associated with a wide range of long-term development activities designed to promote structural stability, or with short-term actions with direct conflict prevention objectives'.² Since the EU undertakes 'a broad range of activities to solidify peace and avoid the relapse into violent conflict', peacebuilding has arguably 'become central to the self-conception of the EU as a foreign policy actor'.³ Moreover, the term peacebuilding appears in various EU policy documents and statements⁴, on its website⁵

¹ 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', European Security Strategy, 12 December 2003; The Treaty of Lisbon (2007/2009). See also, Joelle Jenny, 'The Growing Role of Conflict Prevention in Support of the EU's Efforts in Peacebuilding and Statebuilding', *GREAT insights* 4(1), December 2014/January 2015.

² Catriona Gourlay, 'EU-UN Cooperation in Peacebuilding: Partners in Practice?', UNIDIR, 2009/7, p. 3

² Catriona Gourlay, 'EU-UN Cooperation in Peacebuilding: Partners in Practice?', UNIDIR, 2009/7, p. 3

³ Marco Overhaus and Mateja Peter, 'The EU and Peacebuilding: South Sudan and the Sahel Indicate That the Union Is Rethinking Its Concepts but Not Yet Changing Its Policies', *SWP Comments* 41, December 2012, p. 1.

⁴ Mostly spelled 'peace building' or 'peace-building.

⁵ See, for example, http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/conflict_prevention/index_en.htm; and http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/nepal/eu_nepal/development_cooperation/stability_peace_building/index_en.htm.

and in names of organisational units.⁶ Despite the lack of a clear organisational definition it therefore makes sense to discuss the EU's conception of peacebuilding in the context of this project.⁷ We shall see that its peacebuilding conception is closely related to a broad understanding of conflict prevention, which is seen as central to the organisation's action beyond its borders:

Violent conflicts cost lives, cause human rights abuses, displace people, disrupt livelihoods, set back economic development, exacerbate state fragility, weaken governance and undermine national and regional security. Preventing conflicts and relapses into conflict, in accordance with international law, is therefore a primary objective of the EU's external action, in which it could take a leading role acting in conjunction with its global, regional, national and local partners.⁸

This paper outlines the genesis of the approach that can be labelled EU peacebuilding, the concepts that underpin it, as well as the various actors and instruments involved in these efforts. It concludes by comparing the EU's approach to the liberal peacebuilding approach that has been favoured by the UN, the international financial institutions and other traditional peacebuilding actors since the 1990s.

Genesis, central concepts and guiding paradigm

The change in global politics following the end of the Cold War and the war in the Balkans in the 1990s led to the development of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) in 1992, and subsequently the beginnings of a common defence policy (which would eventually become the Common Security and Defence Policy, CSDP) in the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999. Building on the Western European Union's Petersberg tasks, this treaty outlined a range of military tasks for the EU, including peacekeeping, crisis management by combat forces, humanitarian and rescue tasks.⁹

In 2001, the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflict (the so-called Gothenburg programme), framed conflict prevention as a policy objective for the EU and outlined a series of actions to employ in order to prevent violent conflict, human suffering and social and economic dislocation, including improved early warning, enhanced short- and long-term instruments for prevention and the forging of partnerships for prevention. Two years later, the European Security Strategy (ESS) analysed the EU's security environment and identified its key security challenges and the political implications. It formulated a set of strategic priorities for the EU, including priorities for conflict prevention and crisis management, and stated that 'the EU is committed to reinforcing its cooperation with the UN to assist countries emerging from

⁶ E.g. the European External Action Services' Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Mediation Division, see, http://eeas.europa.eu/background/docs/organisation_en.pdf.

⁷ This paper is written as part of the Rising Powers and Peacebuilding project, which is a collaborative project between ACCORD, Istanbul Policy Center (IPC); United Service Institution of India (USI), the Center for Strategic and International Studies of Jakarta, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) and the American University's School of International Service, and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

⁸ Council of the European Union, Council Conclusions on Conflict Prevention, 3101st Foreign Affairs Council Meeting, Luxembourg, 20 June 2011, para 1.

⁹ Treaty of Amsterdam, 1999, art. 17.

conflict’ – a clear reference to post-conflict peacebuilding.¹⁰ The ESS emphasised the connection between security and development and the conflict-insecurity-poverty cycle.¹¹ The report on the implementation of the ESS, which was published in 2008, reiterated this and stated that poverty eradication was a condition for sustainable peace.¹² It was also informative with regard to the EU thinking around peacebuilding:

Preventing threats from becoming sources of conflict early on must be at the heart of our approach. Peace-building and long-term poverty reduction are essential to this. Each situation requires coherent use of our instruments, including political, diplomatic, development, humanitarian, crisis response, economic and trade co-operation, and civilian and military crisis management. We should also expand our dialogue and mediation capacities. EU Special Representatives bring EU influence to bear in various conflict regions. Civil society and NGOs have a vital role to play as actors and partners. Our election monitoring missions, led by members of the European Parliament, also make an important contribution.¹³

Several communications by the European Commission, on the topics of security, development and situations of fragility make similar claims regarding priorities and objectives, thus reflecting an understanding of sustainable peace, in which security and development are seen as interlinked.

Significant decisions related to the EU’s external action, including efforts that may be labelled peacebuilding, were made through the Treaty of Lisbon, although the term peacebuilding was not used explicitly.¹⁴ The Treaty was signed in 2007 and entered into force on 1 December 2009. It committed the EU to ‘preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security’¹⁵, and established the position of High Representative for the Union in Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission (HR/VP) and the European External Action Service (EEAS). The new HR/VP position was to encompass the competencies previously shared by the Council’s High Representative and the Commission’s Commissioner for External Relations, and was to be responsible for the operational aspects of the union’s foreign and security policy and to ensure coherence in policy implementation. The HR/VP was to be supported by the EEAS, an inter-institutional body which ‘is supposed to translate the strategic concepts into daily politics within the EU and vis-à-vis third actors’.¹⁶

¹⁰ ‘A Secure Europe in a Better World’, European Security Strategy, 12 December 2003, p. 11.

¹¹ ‘A Secure Europe in a Better World’, European Security Strategy, 12 December 2003, p. 2

¹² ‘Providing Security in a Changing World’, Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy, S407/08, Brussels 11 December 2008.

¹³ ‘Providing Security in a Changing World’, Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy, S407/08, Brussels 11 December 2008, p. 9.

¹⁴ Rather the terms conflict prevention, peace-keeping, peace making and post-conflict stabilisation were used. On the forseen implications of the Lisbon Treaty for peacebuilding, written in 2009, see, European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), ‘Peacebuilding and the Lisbon Treaty’, downloadable on http://www.eplo.org/assets/files/2.%20Activities/Working%20Groups/EEAS/EPLO_Comments_Peacebuilding_and_the_Lisbon_Treaty.pdf.

¹⁵ The Treaty of Lisbon (2007/2009), article 21.2(c).

¹⁶ Claudia Major and Christian Mölling (2013), ‘Towards an EU Peacebuilding Strategy: The Effects of the Lisbon Treaty on the Comprehensive Approach of the EU in the area of Civilian Crisis Management’, *European Foreign Affairs Review* 18, special issue, p. 56.

In its work for poverty eradication, conflict prevention and sustainable peace, the EU has a wide range of political, economic and developmental tools at its disposal. Additionally, since 2003, the EU has deployed more than 30 CSDP missions – some military and some civilian. In order for all actors, instruments and activities to pull in the same direction, there is a need for coherence and coordination in planning and implementation. The EU has therefore adopted the so-called comprehensive approach as a guiding paradigm.

The comprehensive approach has two meanings. The first is narrow, focusing on civil-military cooperation – cooperation between political, civilian and military actors – in the theatre of an international operation (a CSDP mission in the EU context). This is based on the insight that military means are not sufficient in order to deal with the challenges of complex crises. NATO operates with such an understanding of the comprehensive approach, and this was also the EU's understanding prior to the Lisbon Treaty, reflected already in the ESS.¹⁷

The second meaning is broader and goes beyond CSDP operations. It refers to an integrated EU approach towards a third country or region, based on a set of agreed objectives and utilising the whole range of the tools, policies and activities that the EU has at its disposal. In some instances the objectives and activities are contained in EU country or region strategies. This understanding of the comprehensive approach correlates to the “whole-of-government” or “3D” approach taken by individual states, or the UN's “One UN” approach at the country level. This is how the EU's understanding of the comprehensive approach has evolved post-Lisbon, when the HR/VP was given the responsibility to develop and implement it.¹⁸ In its conclusions on the EU's comprehensive approach in 2014, the Council stressed that

the comprehensive approach is both a general working method and a set of concrete measures and processes to improve how the EU, based on a common strategic vision and drawing on its wide array of existing tools and instruments, collectively can develop, embed and deliver more coherent and more effective policies, working practices, actions and results. Its fundamental principles are relevant for the broad spectrum of EU external action. The need for such a comprehensive approach is most acute in crisis and conflict situations and in fragile states, enabling a rapid and effective EU response, including through conflict prevention.¹⁹

In addition to the efficiency rationale mentioned here, the comprehensive approach can also be seen as a reflection of a conception of security which is in line with ‘human security’ as outlined in the 1994 Human Development Report. Here, security is understood as both ‘freedom from fear’ and ‘freedom from want’ and the individual is introduced as an alternative referent object for security to the state.²⁰ Several academics

¹⁷ Nicoletta Pirozzi, ‘The EU's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management’, EU Crisis Management Paper Series, Brussels: DCAF, June 2013

¹⁸ Eva Gross, ‘Peacebuilding in 3D: EU and US Approaches’, *Challiot Paper* no 130, December 2013.

Nicoletta Pirozzi, ‘The EU's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management’, EU Crisis Management Paper Series, Brussels: DCAF, June 2013.

¹⁹ Council Conclusions on the EU's Comprehensive Approach, Foreign Affairs Council Meeting, Brussels, 12 May 2014, para 2.

²⁰ United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 1994: New Dimensions of Human Security*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. For a discussion of this, see, Nicoletta Pirozzi, ‘The EU's

and commentators have argued for making an explicit link between the EU's security thinking and 'human security,' and the Report on the Implementation of the ESS did so.²¹ The EU's Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel (2011) and Strategic framework for the Horn of Africa (2011) are explicit with regard to the interrelatedness of security and development, and reflect the comprehensive approach.²² The complex institutional set-up that exists in order to operationalize and implement the comprehensive approach is beyond the scope of this paper.

It is important to note EU member states' double role in the context of the comprehensive approach. As EU decision-makers, the member states must adhere to the comprehensive approach, but the individual member state can also (and many do) choose to operate bilaterally in countries where the EU is engaged in peacebuilding (eg. in development assistance, diplomacy and military intervention). In other words, there may be parallel communitarian and intergovernmental approaches to peacebuilding in one country, and these approaches may differ. In such instances, EU member states operating bilaterally become (partially) 'external' actors with whom the EU needs to coordinate/cooperate with in order to ensure coherence. This adds another layer of complexity to the comprehensive approach.²³

To sum up, although not explicitly formulated, it could be argued that the EU operates with a conception of peacebuilding which is closely connected to a broad conflict prevention approach, encompassing both the lapse and relapse into conflict. This is seen as a primary objective of the EU's external action. Security and the preservation of peace are seen as closely related to poverty eradication and other development objectives. Hence, a broad range of tools and instruments are employed towards this end. In order to ensure that the wide array of EU tools and instruments are utilised coherently and efficiently, the EU has adopted the comprehensive approach as a guiding paradigm.

Pointing to 'the generous parameters of what falls under the 'peacebuilding' rubric" in the EU context, Simon Duke and Aurélie Courtier, argues that 'it almost seems simpler to ask what is not directly or indirectly peacebuilding,' and suggest viewing peacebuilding as 'synergy rather than strategy'.²⁴ Be that as it may, let us now turn to the different

Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management', EU Crisis Management Paper Series, Brussels: DCAF, June 2013, pp. 5-6.

²¹ *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe: The Barcelona Report of the Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities*, Barcelona 15 September 2004; Mary Martin, Mary Kaldor and Sabine Selchow, 'Human Security: A New Strategic Narrative for Europe', *International Affairs* 83(2), 2007; Mary Martin and Mary Kaldor (eds.), *The European Union and Human Security: External Interventions and Missions*: Routledge, 2009; 'Providing Security in a Changing World', Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy, S407/08, Brussels 11 December 2008, p. 2.

²² For more details on these strategies as test cases for the comprehensive approach, see, Nicoletta Pirozzi, 'The EU's Comprehensive Approach to Crisis Management', EU Crisis Management Paper Series, Brussels: DCAF, June 2013, pp. 15-19.

²³ For a discussion of how this has played out in South Sudan and the Sahel, see, Marco Overhaus and Mateja Peter, 'The EU and Peacebuilding: South Sudan and the Sahel Indicate That the Union Is Rethinking Its Concepts but Not Yet Changing Its Policies', *SWP Comments* 41, December 2012. Regarding this issue in the period of 2001-2010, see 'Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission Support for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding', Final Report, vol. 1 2011, p. v, downloadable at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/thematic_evaluation_of_ec_support_to_pb_and_conflict_prevention_on_2011_en.pdf.

²⁴ Simon Duke and Aurélie Courtier, 'EU Peacebuilding: Concepts, Players and Instruments', Working Paper 33, Centre for the Law of EU External Relations, 2009, pp. 38, 3.

instruments and actors that the EU has at its disposal for the promotion and preservation – or building – of peace.²⁵

Instruments and actors

CSDP missions

In addition to its co-operation with, and contribution to, other international organisations in peace operations, the EU also conducts its own CSDP missions and operations. Since 2003, when the EU deployed its EU Police Mission in Bosnia (EUPM), the organisation has launched more than 30 such missions and operations – some civilian and some military. Currently, there are military missions and operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Mediterranean; Mali; Central African Republic; Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Somalia (two). There are civilian CSDP missions in Kosovo; Ukraine; the Palestinian Territories (two); Georgia; Afghanistan; Libya; Mali; Niger; and one mission covering Djibouti, Seychelles, Somalia and Tanzania.

The different CSDP missions and operations pursue various peacebuilding objectives, and include monitoring missions (eg. AMM in Aceh; EUMM Georgia); deterrence operations (eg. EUFOR Concordia in FYROM; EUFOR Altea in Bosnia), police missions (EUPOL Kinshasa in DRC; EUPOL Afghanistan); capacity-building missions (EUCAP Sahel); rule of law missions (eg. EUJUST Themis in Georgia; EULEX Kosovo); border management missions (eg. EUBAM Ukraine-Moldova; EUBAM Libya); security sector reform missions (eg. EUSEC RD Congo; EUSSR Guinea-Bissau); and military training missions (eg. EUTM Somalia; EUTM Mali). EU member states take the lead in decisions regarding the deployment and staffing of these operations and missions, while the EEAS structures offer support.²⁶

Diplomacy

The EU has currently 139 delegations and offices globally. The EEAS is responsible for running these and their staff is drawn from different EEAS departments, the European Commission and the member states. They also have locally employed staff. Some delegations are responsible for maintaining relations with organisations like the United Nations and African Union, while most are responsible for one country or a group of countries. In addition to conducting tasks such as administering aid and analysing and reporting on developments in their host countries, they also carry out diplomatic tasks such as presenting and explaining EU policies, conducting negotiations and maintaining political dialogue.

Mediation

Mediation is seen as a central element of the EU's conflict prevention and peacebuilding work. This work is partly conducted by EU special representatives, of which there are nine.²⁷ They act in support of the HR/VP and are each given responsibility for a specific region or country that is challenged by conflict, playing an active role in peace

²⁵ Encompassing both preventive and post-conflict measures.

²⁶ Eva Gross, 'Peacebuilding in 3D: EU and US Approaches', *Challiot Paper* no 130, December 2013, pp. 23-24.

²⁷ There is currently no female EU Special Representative, something that sends an unfortunate message since they are to act as the face of the EU.

consolidation.²⁸ The special representatives are frequently involved in mediation efforts, together with CSDP missions and EU delegations. These efforts may be at the high political level, or concern confidence-building, political facilitation, or civil society dialogue. In addition to its direct involvement in mediation, the EU also funds mediation efforts and supports mediation conducted by actors like the United Nations and the African Union.

The Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Mediation Instruments Division within the EEAS supports these mediation efforts, and the Mediation Support Team offer advice, technical expertise and real-time support to both EU institutions and partners, during and after crises and conflicts. It has provided technical support e.g. in Mali, Myanmar, South Sudan, Lebanon, Central African Republic and Ukraine. The Mediation Support Team also promotes the use of mediation as a first response to crises.²⁹

Aid

Being the world's largest aid donor, with a budget of € 960 billion for the period of 2014-2020, the EU views this as an important contribution to peace and prosperity in its partner countries. The security-development link emphasised in the documents discussed above is visible in the EU's spending on development aid. The EU Commission's traditional development aid has become increasingly aligned with a conflict prevention rationale. Its usage to meet conflict prevention objectives is noticeable in its geographic allocation. In particular, development spending is used to support governance. Only the allocation of humanitarian aid remains needs-based.³⁰

Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP)

Due to the seven-year budgeting cycle of the EU, there is a need for funds that can be allocated rapidly in order to address a crisis situation or emerging crisis. The current instrument for such funding is the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP). It was established in 2014 as a successor to the Rapid Reaction Mechanism, the Instrument for Stability (IfS) and some other more narrowly focused instruments. It is a funding tool that can provide rapid short-term funding to activities during crises or emerging crises as well as more long-term support. The long-term element is a new addition, compared to its predecessor the IfS. Hence, the IcSP's focus is on activities in 'crisis response, conflict prevention, peace-building and crisis preparedness', as well as 'global and trans-regional threats'.³¹ In the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the IcSP is to support measures that strengthen the EU's and its partners' capacity to prevent conflict, build peace and address pre- and post-conflict needs. This includes support for early warning and conflict-sensitive risk analysis; confidence-building; mediation; dialogue; reconciliation; participation and deployment in civilian stabilisation missions; post-conflict and post-disaster recovery with relevance to the political and security situation; and activities aimed at curbing the use of natural

²⁸ In addition there is also a thematic special representative for human rights.

²⁹ EU External Action Service, Fact sheet EU Mediation Support Team, downloadable at http://eeas.europa.eu/factsheets/docs/factsheet_eu-mediation-support-team_en.pdf; for more on EU mediation, see, Julian Bergmann and Arne Niemann, 'The European Union as an Effective Mediator in Peace Negotiations? Conceptual Framework and Plausibility Probe', *Mainz Papers on International and European Politics*, 5, 2013.

³⁰ Eva Gross, 'Peacebuilding in 3D: EU and US Approaches', *Challiot Paper* no 130, December 2013, p. 22.

³¹ L77/1, Regulation (EU) no. 230/2014, of the European Parliament and of the Council, 11 March 2014, art.1, para. 1.

resources to finance conflicts.³² The long-term component focuses on global, trans-regional and emerging threats and includes *inter alia* measures addressing the fight against organised crime and terrorism and security in the context of climate change.³³ EU member states, partner countries/regions, European agencies, international organisations and joint bodies are eligible for funding by the IcSP. The financial envelope for the IcSP for the period of 2014-2020 is € 2 338 719 000.³⁴ In comparison, the IfS had a budget of € 2 000 000 000 for period of 2007-2013, and its predecessor, the Rapid Reaction Mechanism, had an annual budget of € 30 000 000.³⁵

Sanctions

Sanctions or restrictive measures against third countries, individuals or entities are regarded as an essential foreign policy tool by the EU. These measures can be imposed by the United Nations under chapter VII of the Charter, or the EU may decide to add to UN measures or adopt restrictive measures autonomously. The EU emphasises that these measures should be part of a comprehensive approach, that they are preventive, and that they are used to bring about a change in policy or activity by the target. Moreover, the EU stresses that the adverse consequences should be minimised for the civilian population and those conducting legitimate activities. Restrictive measures that are relevant for EU peacebuilding are, for example, restriction on admission and freezing of funds and economic resources for persons who seriously threaten the security situation in a country; embargo on arms and related material; ban on the provision of certain services; and ban on export of equipment for internal repression.³⁶

This paper will not offer a thorough evaluation of the EU's peacebuilding instruments and efforts outlined above, but a few challenges and limitations should nevertheless be mentioned. First, there are limitations with regard to the speed in which the EU can act. The need to reach agreement between 28 member states and the institutions means that there will be a certain time lag in most instances.³⁷ Moreover, the EU's complex set-up and plethora of actors also mean that there is a tendency to work in silos, undermining the effectiveness of the comprehensive approach. The deployment of EU Special Representatives should arguably be done in a more systematic manner and be better aligned with the comprehensive approach. The EU should also ensure that it fully implements UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and ensure the participation of women, and include a focus on the needs of women and girls, in all aspects of the EU's peacebuilding work. The EU needs to employ gender expertise in the EEAS and CSDP missions and to appoint female Special Representatives.

³² Art 4.

³³ Art 5.

³⁴ L77/1, Regulation (EU) no. 230/2014, of the European Parliament and of the Council, 11 March 2014, art. 13.

³⁵ Eva Gross, 'Peacebuilding in 3D: EU and US Approaches', *Challiot Paper* no 130, December 2013, p. 22.

³⁶ For a complete overview of EU sanctions currently in use, see, European Union Restrictive Measures in Force, list updated 30 September 2015, downloadable on http://www.eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/sanctions/docs/measures_en.pdf.

³⁷ The IcSP is, of course, an exception given that it is designed for rapid allocation of funds for addressing crises and emerging crises .

EU peacebuilding – challenging or aligned with the liberal peacebuilding approach?

Given the wider academic and practical debates over the nature of peacebuilding, it is worth considering whether or not the EU's approach to peacebuilding may constitute a challenge to the liberal peacebuilding approach that has been favoured by the UN, the international financial institutions and other traditional peacebuilding actors since the 1990s.

The liberal peacebuilding approach takes as its starting point the so-called liberal peace thesis, which states that liberal democracies do not go to war against each other. Hence, peacebuilding efforts have focused on establishing democratic institutions and promoting market economies in countries coming out of violent conflict. This approach has been criticised for being preoccupied with the building of state institutions and thus for being too top-down in its approach, while ignoring important societal aspects of the conflict dynamics at hand. Moreover, liberal peacebuilding has tended to be a programmatic-technocratic enterprise, relying on templates in its implementation, with little regard for the particular local circumstances. With a state-centric focus, the peacebuilding actors have mostly interacted with state leaders, governments and elites, and paying little, or only symbolic, attention to the local population's visions for a just peace. Finally, the liberal peacebuilding actors have also been criticised for being unaware of this approach's normative implications, treating the promotion of liberal values as the only way to build peace.³⁸

There are several similarities between this approach and that of the EU. The advancement of liberal ideas such as democracy, the rule of law, human rights and a global market economy are considered to be central to the EU's external action.³⁹ However, at the rhetorical level, the EU's peacebuilding approach also differs from the liberal peacebuilding approach in several ways:

There is an expressed commitment by the EU to deal with the root causes of conflict. This commitment was formulated in the 2001 European Commission's Communication on Conflict Prevention.⁴⁰ Addressing root causes necessitates dealing with each conflict situation on its own terms as well as consulting with a wide range of stakeholders in the particular society, as the opinions of what constitutes such root causes may vary. The liberal one-size-fits-all and top-down approach is thus not suitable to this end. The importance of involving civil society and NGOs as actors and partners is frequently highlighted, as well as the role of political dialogue in peacebuilding and conflict prevention.⁴¹ It is believed that such dialogue would both serve to identify the various

³⁸ There is a substantial body of literature critiquing this peacebuilding approach. For a summary of this critique, see, Eli Starnes, 'Values, Context and Hybridity: How Can the Insights from the Liberal Peace Critique Literature Be Brought to Bear on the Practices of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture?', in Tom Young (ed.) *Readings in the International Relations of Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 2016.

³⁹ See, for example, Treaty of Lisbon, para. 10A.2.

⁴⁰ Downloadable at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2001:0211:FIN:EN:PDF>

⁴¹ See, for example, 'Providing Security in a Changing World', Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy, S407/08, Brussels 11 December 2008, p. 9; and European Commission,

views on crises and conflict situation, and act as a preventive or de-escalatory measure in itself.

The intention to involve civil society can be seen as a reflection of the commitment to human security, which was discussed above. From a human security perspective, the security of individuals, not states, is the primary concern. We saw above that human security forms part of the EU's security thinking. Moreover, the security of EU citizens, not states, is the rationale for the union's security and defence policy. In peacebuilding, the widespread use of development measures and the emphasis on poverty reduction is also consistent with a human security perspective and its inclusion of 'freedom from want' into the conception of security. The emphasis on regional integration and the 'soft borders' within the union can also be seen as reflections of this perspective, even if there is also a strong economic rationale for this.

These conceptual orientations at policy level of the EU challenge or expand a liberal peacebuilding approach. However, studies have shown that they have not been fully appropriated at the operational/practical level.⁴²

Regarding addressing the root causes of conflict in peacebuilding and conflict prevention, an evaluation of the Commission's efforts in the period of 2001-2010 found that instead of explicitly analysing root causes, the focus had been on mitigating the impact of root causes, i.e. acting upon the consequences of the conflict.⁴³ Political dialogue had been used in some cases to address root causes, but not in a systematic manner.⁴⁴ Although the Commission had devised a checklist for root causes already in 2001, few of the actors involved in conflict prevention and peacebuilding were familiar with it.⁴⁵ In practical terms, root causes are more frequently treated as being cross-cutting rather than context specific, which in turn leads to an approach that is more inline with liberal peacebuilding's template approach.

When it comes to partnering with civil society, the funding and use of the Civil Society

'Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention', <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2001:0211:FIN:EN:PDF>.

⁴² Oliver Richmond, Annika Björkdahl and Stefanie Kappler, 'The Emerging EU Peacebuilding Framework: Confirming or transcending Liberal Peacebuilding', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 24(3), 2011; Marco Overhaus and Mateja Peter, 'The EU and Peacebuilding: South Sudan and the Sahel Indicate That the Union Is Rethinking Its Concepts but Not Yet Changing Its Policies', *SWP Comments* 41, December 2012; Argyro Krtsonaki and Stefan Wolff, 'The EU's Responses to Conflicts in its Wider Neighbourhood: Human or European Security?', *Global Society* 29(2), 2015, pp. 192-226; 'Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission Support for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding', Final Report, vol. 1 2011, p.iii, downloadable at

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/thematic_evaluation_of_ec_support_to_pb_and_conflict_prevention_2011_en.pdf.

⁴³ The case of Sierra Leone and Bolivia were notable exceptions to this. 'Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission Support for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding', Final Report, vol. 1 2011, pp. 28-34, downloadable at

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/thematic_evaluation_of_ec_support_to_pb_and_conflict_prevention_2011_en.pdf; cf. Michael Pugh's conceptions of 'riot control' in 'Peacekeeping and Critical Theory', *International Peacekeeping*, 11(1), pp. 39-58; and Robert W. Cox's 'problem-solving' in 'The Crisis of World Order and the Challenge to International Organisation', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 29(2), 1994, pp. 99-113.

⁴⁴ P. 31.

⁴⁵ P. 29.

Dialogue Network should be mentioned. This is run by the NGO consortium the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO), and engages civil society in EU policy and strategy formulation and review. However, much more needs to be done in order to achieve broad involvement in formulating EU peacebuilding priorities, not least when it comes to involving women. As already noted, the EU needs to ensure the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

As regards human security, the record is varied. Having studied conflicts in the EU's wider neighbourhood, Argyro Krtsonaki and Stefan Wolff find that the EU's efforts are most aligned with a human security approach in conflicts where it perceives itself to have the greatest interests at stake. In these conflicts, 'human security is more than a rhetorical concept'.⁴⁶ A study by Oliver Richmond, Annika Björkdahl and Stefanie Kappler finds that there is a difference between EU peacebuilding within EU borders and beyond. While intra-Europe peacebuilding to some extent transcend liberal peacebuilding, EU peacebuilding beyond its borders – the focus of this paper – follows the liberal peacebuilding approach.⁴⁷

The explanation for this may be found in the importance put on stable states and state institutions by the EU. It considers a capable and effective state to be the 'cornerstone of stability and growth'.⁴⁸ Much of the EU's peacebuilding work is therefore geared towards 'traditional' top-down statebuilding: developing a well-functioning state apparatus, strengthening governance at the level of the state and security sector reform, as well as managing borders.⁴⁹ Real people-centred peacebuilding would arguably prioritise other measures and objectives in pursuit of sustainable peace

Nevertheless, there are clear EU aspirations to practice a different kind of statebuilding to the one that has dominated the liberal peacebuilding approach. These aspirations are apparent in the following remarks by Joelle Jenny, Director for Conflict Prevention and Security Policy at the European External Action Service (EEAS):

true state-building connects the institutions of governance with the people, and links people with people, in a social contract [...] The Arab Spring and developments in other parts of the world have acted as a reminder that the EU needs to engage with and understand the perspectives of people in those countries, not just governments, if we are going to respond effectively to state-building and peace-building challenges.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Argyro Krtsonaki and Stefan Wolff, 'The EU's Responses to Conflicts in its Wider Neighbourhood: Human or European Security?', *Global Society* 29(2), 2015, pp. 192-226.

⁴⁷ Oliver Richmond, Annika Björkdahl and Stefanie Kappler, 'The Emerging EU Peacebuilding Framework: Confirming or transcending Liberal Peacebuilding', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 24(3), 2011.

⁴⁸ Joelle Jenny, 'The Growing Role of Conflict Prevention in Support of the EU's Efforts in Peacebuilding and Statebuilding', *GREAT insights* 4(1), December 2014/January 2015; see also, Catriona Gourlay, 'EU-UN Cooperation in Peacebuilding: Partners in Practice?', UNIDIR, 2009/7, p. 41;

⁴⁹ Oliver Richmond, Annika Björkdahl and Stefanie Kappler, 'The Emerging EU Peacebuilding Framework: Confirming or transcending Liberal Peacebuilding', *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 24(3), 2011.

⁵⁰ Joelle Jenny, 'The Growing Role of Conflict Prevention in Support of the EU's Efforts in Peacebuilding and Statebuilding', *GREAT insights* 4(1), December 2014/January 2015.

By way of conclusion, however, it can be argued that despite these aspirations, in practical/operational terms, the EU's peacebuilding approach beyond its border has a lot in common with the liberal peacebuilding of the UN, the international financial institutions and other traditional actors. That said, it is important to note one significant difference between the EU approach and that of the UN: The EU's emphasis on conflict prevention stands in stark contrast to the UN's reluctance to include a prevention element in its peacebuilding concept and practice. Due to certain UN member states' fear that conflict prevention would become a pretext for undue interference in their internal affairs, UN peacebuilding has been limited – conceptually and practically – to the post-conflict phase and the avoidance of relapse into violent conflict.⁵¹ The EU on the other hand, has no such reservations and has seen conflict prevention as a primary objective of its external action since 2001. While an evaluation of the Commission's support for conflict prevention and peacebuilding found that it generally had a reactive rather than pro-active approach to conflict in the period of 2001-2010⁵², the development of the EU's early warning system and the increased emphasis on structural conflict analysis in recent years are important steps taken to address this. These can rightly be regarded as efforts to institutionalise a culture of prevention within the EU.

⁵¹ The recent reviews of UN peace operations, the UN peacebuilding architecture and the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325, have, however, emphasised the need to change this, see Eli Stamnes and Kari Osland, 'Synthesis Report: Reviewing UN Peace Operations, the UN Peacebuilding Architecture and the Implementation of UNSCR 1325', *NUPI Report 2*, 2016.

⁵² 'Thematic Evaluation of the European Commission Support for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding', Final Report, vol. 1 2011, pp. iii-iv, downloadable at http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/fpi/documents/thematic_evaluation_of_ec_support_to_pb_and_conflict_prevention_2011_en.pdf