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REPORT

on the Commission communication on Conflict Prevention
(COM(2001) 211 – C5-0458/2001 – 2001/2182(COS))

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence
Policy

Rapporteur: Joost Lagendijk

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PROCEDURAL PAGE

By letter of 25 April 2001, the Commission forwarded to Parliament a communication on Conflict prevention: regional integration and co-operation, short-term prevention (COM(2001) 211 – 2001/2182(COS)).

At the sitting of 12 November 2001 the President of Parliament will announce that she had referred the communication to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy as the committee responsible and the Committee on Development and Co-operation for its opinion (C5-0458/2001).

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy appointed Joost Lagendijk rapporteur at its meeting of 28 May 2001.

It considered the Commission communication and the draft report at its meetings of 9 October and 5 and 6 November 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution by 43 votes to 1.

The following were present for the vote: Elmar Brok chairman; Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne and Catherine Lalumière, vice-chairmen; Jan Joost Lagendijk, rapporteur; Alexandros Baltas, Bastiaan Belder, Andre Brie, John Walls Cushman, Rosa M. Díez González, Robert J.E. Evans (for Gary Titley pursuant to Rule 153(2)), Giovanni Claudio Fava (for Klaus Hänsch), Monica Frassoni (for Daniel Marc Cohn-Bendit), Per Gahrton, Alfred Gomolka, Bertel Haarder, Glenys E. Kinnock (for Magdalene Hoff), Christoph Werner Konrad (for The Lord Bethell), Armin Laschet (for Gunilla Carlsson), Cecilia Malmström (for Pere Esteve), Franco Marini, Pedro Marset Campos, Hugues Martin, Linda McAvan, Philippe Morillon, Sami Naïr, Arie M. Oostlander, Reino Kalervo Paasilinna (for Emilio Menéndez del Valle), Doris Pack (for Ingo Friedrich), Hans-Gert Poettering, Jacques F. Poos, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jacques Santer, Amalia Sartori, Elisabeth Schroedter, Ioannis Souladakis, Francesco Enrico Speroni, Ursula Stenzel, Hannes Swoboda, Johan Van Hecke, Geoffrey Van Orden, Demetrio Volcic (for Pasqualina Napoletano), Jan Marinus Wiersma, Matti Wuori and Christos Zacharakis.

The opinion of the Committee on Development and Cooperation is attached.

The report was tabled on 9 November 2001.

The deadline for tabling amendments will be indicated in the draft agenda for the relevant part-session.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

European Parliament resolution on the Commission communication on Conflict Prevention (COM(2001) 211 – C5-0458/2001 – 2001/2182(COS))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication (COM(2001) 211 – C5-0458/2001),
- having regard to its recommendation of 10 February 1999 on the creation of a European Civil Peace Corps¹,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 June 2000 on the establishment of a Common European Security and Defence Policy with a view to the European Council in Feira²,
- having regard to its resolution of 30 November 2000 on the establishment of a Common European Security and Defence Policy after Cologne and Helsinki³,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 March 2001 on developing the Union's capabilities in conflict prevention and civil crisis management⁴,
- having regard to its legislative resolution of 17 January 2001 on the proposal for a Council regulation creating the rapid reaction facility (COM(2000) 119 - C5-0272/2000 - 2000/0081(CNS))⁵,
- having regard to the Presidency Conclusions of the Göteborg European Council which endorsed the European Union Programme for the Prevention of Violent conflicts as well as the EU-UN co-operation in the Field of Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management,
- having regard to the Council Decision of 22 May 2000 setting up a committee for civilian aspects of crisis management, and to the development of concrete targets for civilian crisis management in the fields of police, rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection during the Swedish Presidency;
- having regard to the Council Decisions of 22 January 2001 setting up the permanent bodies of the CESDP, in particular the PSC (Political and Security Committee), which will play a central role in the definition of and follow-up to the EU's response to crises⁶,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 381/2001 of 26 February 2001 creating a

¹ OJ C 150, 28.5.1999, p.164

² OJ C 67, 1.3.2001, p.283

³ OJ C 228, 13.8.2001, p. 9

⁴ Texts adopted 15.3.2001, Item 4

⁵ OJ C 262, 18.9.2001, p.141

⁶ OJ L 27, 30.1.2001, p.1-7

rapid-reaction mechanism¹,

- having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy and the opinion of the Committee on Development and Cooperation (A5-0394/2001),

A. Whereas the most important elements of the European Parliament's views on conflict prevention have already been expressed in several official positions, most of them still being valid,

B. Whereas the scale of any possible conflict in the modern world underlines the necessity to maintain both a parallel global and European approach simultaneously,

C. Whereas there is no reference in the Commission communication to the conflicting impact that several common policies of the European Union could have on the origin and development of local conflicts in some areas,

D. Whereas the European Parliament's proposal, submitted to the 1996 IGC, to establish a European Civil Peace Corps has not yet merited any comment from the Commission or Council, despite being examined at the above-mentioned 1996 IGC, and supported by some countries,

E. Whereas sole reliance on the traditional resources associated with political, diplomatic or military strategies is inadequate for conflict prevention and there is a need: for a comprehensive peace-building approach, involving humanitarian assistance, development co-operation, trade and foreign and security policies, restoration and maintenance of the internal legal order, the creation or re-creation of administrative structures, inter-ethnic dialogue and other approaches to conflict settlement,

F. Whereas security and solidarity are increasingly two sides of the same coin in today's world and a massive programme promoted by the international community for poverty eradication must, for this reason, also be a priority for the EU,

G. Whereas it is essential to point at, among others, ethnic and religious conflicts, terrorism associated with nationalism and fundamentalism, organised crime and drug trafficking, lack of democracy as well as the degradation of the environment and water issues, as potential causes of conflicts,

H. Whereas in a post-violence period such interventions need to contribute to rehabilitation and reconciliation; involving as much as possible all actors of the civil society, anticipating conflict or solving it with non-military instruments, such as civilian crisis management and also post-conflict action,

I. Whereas interventions to prevent conflict need to be: co-ordinated on an

¹ OJ L 57, 27.2.2001, p.5

international level; related to the needs of the population in the conflict area; compatible with civil society and other actors in the field; non-violent and distinct from enforcement actions; flexible and practical; and capable of counteracting violent escalations at an early and timely stage,

J. Whereas the necessity for an enhanced relationship and institutional co-ordination in this area is greater than ever, with regard to both the system of the United Nations and the regional level, in particular with reference to the activities and organs of the OSCE and the Council of Europe,

K. Whereas it is necessary to avoid any possible duplication between the Commission and the Council to assure the effectiveness of the Union's approach to Conflict Prevention,

L. Whereas the European Union has a number of options available to it under its code of conduct on arms exports and its programmes on halting the transfer of small arms with a view to banning the flow of arms to conflict zones; recalling in this connection its resolution of 15 March 2001 on the UN Conference on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, which has since taken place, and in particular its call for the development of a binding code of conduct including the prohibition of arms transfers to government and non-state perpetrators that systematically violate human rights or international humanitarian law,

M. Whereas the UN Charter is the ultimate international legal and political basis for guaranteeing international security and for the security policy of the European Union and its Member States, and has universal validity,

1. Welcomes the recent Commission Communication on Conflict Prevention, as a substantial step forward identifying ways in which EU policy can be made more coherent and informed by conflict prevention objectives;
2. Considers, nevertheless, that the Communication does not adequately address the rigidities of the current pillar system for conflict prevention, the need for strengthened inter-institutional co-operation and to overcome fragmented pillar policies, the difficulties of securing the co-operation of Member States, the difference in timing of civilian and military programmes, the need for significant internal capacity-building, and the lack of real strategic and operational co-ordination with NGOs and other actors in civil society, to name but a few obstacles;
3. Welcomes the Commission's plans to work closely with the Council to identify and monitor potential conflict zones, encourages both parties to make use of the information gathered by third parties, such as specialised NGOs and the academic community;
4. Notes that the Communication does not clarify if the Commission evaluates systematically the impact of EU actions targeted to prevent conflict in specific regions of tension; or if the Commission makes any use of the wide range of such analytical studies produced by third parties;

5. Calls for the two-pillar structure and the resulting inconsistency of European foreign policy to be fundamentally called into question in the Laeken Declaration and the subsequent Convention;
6. Stresses that both long-term and short-term conflict prevention requires stronger commitment and political direction on the part of the Member States, as the Community instruments alone are not enough to resolve all possible sources of conflict, and the strengthening of Commission delegations to ensure that conflict prevention is mainstreamed in EU programmes; considers that the EU's external policy budget needs to be raised in order to give the Union an opportunity to realise its ambitions;

On the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts

7. Welcomes the programme for the prevention of violent conflicts decided by the Göteborg European Council on 15th and 16th June 2001; welcomes in particular the concept of a 'culture of prevention' as expressed in that programme;
8. Invites the future Presidencies, the Commission and the Secretary-General/High Representative to pay greater attention to the proposals submitted by the European Parliament, including the proposal calling for the establishment of a European Civil Peace Corps, and to guarantee that resources are set aside for this Peace Corps;
9. Welcomes the new common position on Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution in Africa adopted by the General Affairs Council in May 2001, and recommends a similar approach for each geographical zone where a risk of conflict is apparent ;
10. Invites Members States to strictly abide to the code of conduct on arms exports and to work in order to give this code a binding value as soon as possible;

On the conflicting impact of the common policies of the EU – The need for conflict prevention assessment

11. Considers it necessary to ensure that decisions linked to the Common Policies of the European Union do not have an undesirable and even harmful impact on local conflicts by distorting or even annihilating the market as well as the economic, social and ecological structure of third countries;
12. Deems, therefore, that greater consideration be given to the proposal to make the concept of conflict prevention a horizontal issue in all common policies of the European Union (environment, trade, agriculture, energy, etc.) in order to mainstream conflict prevention, as well as to the proposal of more closely integrating conflict indicators and the objectives of Conflict Prevention into the programming of Community External Aid Programmes;
13. Proposes that the harmful influence which private and public undertakings have in unstable regions should be acknowledged by creating a legally binding framework with sanctions for companies which contribute to conflicts;

14. Proposes to carry out a 'Conflict Prevention Assessment' when examining major decisions concerning the common policies of the Union as well as when launching any type of programme in third countries, in order to establish the eventual impact that these decisions or programmes could have from a conflict prevention perspective;
15. Stresses the importance of integrating political analysis and conflict prevention objectives in the Country Strategy Papers;
16. Reiterates, as additional contribution on local conflicts prevention, its resolution on EU electoral assistance and observation in third countries and, in particular, the attention paid to the need to complete EU's involvement in the country concerned by a long-term sustainable support in the democracy process;
17. Is of the opinion that the EU needs an appropriate structure, which should consist of a 'non-military rapid reaction unit', to select technicians and economists who have received specific training to be used in all relevant sectors, ranging from prevention activities to technical operations, and also a well-trained police force;

Establishing a European Civil Peace Corps

18. Regrets that neither the recent communication from the Commission, the Council nor the European Council have given any kind of follow-up to the proposal submitted by this Parliament in its resolution adopted on 17th May 1995¹, on the eve of the 1996 IGC, and on its Recommendation of 10th February 1999², to establish a European Civil Peace Corps;
19. Reiterates the necessity of establishing such a European Civil Peace Corps, in the framework of the Commission's Rapid Reaction Mechanism, whose task would be to coordinate at a European level the training and deployment of civilian specialists to carry out practical peace-making measures such as arbitration, mediation, distribution of non-partisan information, de-traumatization, and confidence-building between the warring parties, humanitarian aid, reintegration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, education, and monitoring and improving the human rights situation, including human rights accompaniment;
20. Urges, in this regard the Council and the Commission to make the most of the expertise in the EU bodies; calls on the Council to make a full and critical evaluation of the work of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) outlining the future perspectives, the possibilities of a flexible and effective common action of EU-observers with those from other international organisations, specifically those of the OSCE, the shortcomings and the possible new tasks in relation to the establishment of a European Civil Peace Corps; and to report this evaluation to Parliament;
21. Outlines that the ECPC's tasks would be exclusively civilian in nature and devoted to preventing crisis situations from escalating into violence, by making full use of the

¹ OJ C 151, 19.6.1995

² OJ C 150, 28.5.1999, p.164

resources of civil society;

22. Underlines the need, in this perspective, for NGO'S specialised in conflict prevention and crisis-management, both international and region-based, to play a central role in EU conflict prevention actions with the support of the Commission and in full co-operation with the Council's civilian crisis management efforts;

An enhanced relationship with the United Nations and the OSCE

23. Recommends a maximal co-operation with the United Nations mechanisms of conflict prevention as well as with the various programmes and organs set up by the OSCE in this field; urges Member States to commit themselves and work towards a reform of the United Nations, and in particular of the Security Council, in a more democratic and participatory way;
24. Welcomes the Council (General Affairs) conclusions on EU-UN co-operation in Conflict Prevention and Crises Management presented to the Göteborg European Council and strongly recommends a similar approach in order to establish the modalities of an enhanced co-operation between the European Union and the OSCE in the same areas;
25. Recommends strengthening the operational links between the different institutions and organs who play a role in Conflict Prevention within the EU institutional framework with the OSCE REACT mechanism, the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the OSCE Representative of Media Freedom, as well as the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre;

Some other initiatives

26. Suggests that extensive use of the knowledge and expertise available from the academic Conflict Prevention Network (CPN) continue to be made; recalls that the CPN was proposed by Parliament and built up over the past five years; considers that, in line with the original idea, the Network should assist not only the Commission but also the Parliament and the Council by providing a coherent, inter-institutional approach to an ambitious and successful conflict prevention policy; underlines, therefore, that, in the future, the Network extend its activities by also assisting with the best implementation of preventive policies and the monitoring of their outcomes;
27. Reiterates that the proliferation of light weapons and small arms is a major force for instability in all crisis regions and therefore asks the EU to continue to call for an effective control of arms exports, including licensed production, industrial cooperation agreements and arms brokering; to this end, reiterates the need to make legally binding the European Code of Conduct on Arms Exports;
28. Requests that more attention should be paid to education as a key instrument for conflict prevention and to this end calls upon the Commission to contribute to the activities of the UN Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence by promoting the inclusion of peace-building and training in non-violence, mutual respect and non-hatred into the educational curricula throughout the world; and in particular in specific conflict areas such as the

Balkan and the Middle East;

29. Requests its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments of the Member States, as well as to the Secretaries General of United Nations and the OSCE.

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

I Introduction

The object of this report is by no means to repeat what Parliament has already reiterated on this important issue. The EP has always given priority to civil crises management of conflicts, even while recognising that in some cases military crisis management is unavoidable. But, above all, the Parliament has always considered it better and easier to prevent than resolve a conflict, not to say cheaper in terms of human beings and material damages cost. With this in mind, the different proposals included in the recent Commission communication are to be welcomed as is the recent decision of the European Council to launch an EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts. Nevertheless, the Parliament intends now to provide more conceptual thinking and practical proposals in this field. To this end, some specific and, in certain cases, well-known recommendations and suggestions are included herein. As far as the recent Commission Communication, we could say that, in general terms, the Commission provides a large inventory of EU instruments and policies, which could be brought to bear on conflict prevention, and submit a varied list of recommendations, addressing both short-term conflict prevention and long-term support to achieve structural stability. Unfortunately, the Communication is much more laconic and less innovative when it comes to monitoring the implementation and assessing the impact of EU conflict prevention policy.

II Roots of the conflicts and horizontal aspects of the conflict prevention policy of the EU: preventing the conflicting impact of the common policies of the EU

The Göteborg European Council of 15 and 16 June 2001 has recognised that conflict prevention is one of the main objectives of the Union's external relations and should be integrated in all its relevant aspects, including the European Security and Defence Policy, development cooperation and trade. The European Parliament can only agree with such an approach. However, this Rapporteur considers that a further step could be taken by assessing and preventing the impact that certain major decisions adopted in the framework of the common policies of the Union could have as direct or indirect causes of certain local conflicts, namely by distorting or even annihilating the economic and social structure of the poorest countries. Mainstreaming conflict prevention implies, for example, carefully examining, from a conflict prevention perspective, the consequences of the agriculture subsidy levels of the EU for those countries or the possible use of genetically modified organisms (agricultural policy); the refusal to open the EU markets to many of the most sensitive products (including rice, sugar and bananas) of many countries with potential risk of conflict (commercial policy); the readiness to make business with countries which in fact do not respect neither the EU standards on sustainable environment (environmental policy) nor the democratic values of the Union (human rights); etc. The final aim is to foster the idea of coherence between the different EU policies and to give real content to the concept of structural stability proposed by the Commission, by maintaining an integrated focus on sustainable economic development, respect for human rights, viable democratic structures and healthy social conditions. Obviously, this is also true for some national measures and policies with a clear impact on the external action of the EU, especially in the field of arms exports, not least to avoid situations in which military personnel from EU Member States, acting in a peace-keeping capacity, could be confronted again by weapons manufactured and supplied by EU companies.

III On the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts

The Göteborg European Council of 15 and 16 June 2001 endorsed the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts, aimed at improving the Union's capacity to undertake coherent early warning, analysis and action. Future Presidencies, the Commission and the Secretary-General/High Representative have been invited by the European Council to promote the implementation of the programme and to make recommendations for its further development. The aim of this programme is to set clear political priorities for preventing actions, to improve its early warning, action and policy coherence, to enhance the Union's instrument for long and short-term prevention, and to build effective partnership for prevention. The Programme as such is to be welcomed. Nevertheless, it has not resolved some of the institutional weaknesses of the EU conflict prevention system, such as the current centralisation and the existing comitology mechanism. Nor has it resolved the question of how to avoid unnecessary conflicts between the Community's primary role on Conflict Prevention and the intergovernmental second pillar with its Crises Management focus. In addition, not enough attention is paid to the financial aspect of the Programme, possible duplication between the Commission and the Council remains unresolved, and the role of the EP has been neglected once again.

IV Improving the instruments of conflict prevention through the establishment of a European Civil Peace Corps

In the 'Bourlanges/Martin' report, adopted by the European Parliament on 17 May 1995, the EP suggested for the first time that 'a first step towards a contribution to conflict prevention could be the establishment of a European Civil Peace Corps (including conscientious objectors) with training of monitors, mediators and specialists in conflict resolution'. Since then, the European Parliament has, on several occasions, reiterated this statement and developed the ECPC concept, in particular in Mr. Per Gahrton's Report of 28 January 1999 (Doc. A4-0047/1999). In the present report, the European Parliament reiterates once again this demand. It is perfectly imaginable that applying, for instance, the experience of the European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM) in former Yugoslavia and incorporating it into the ECPC project, many specialised NGOs and well-trained civilians with detailed and extensive field experience, the initial core of the ECPC could be relatively easily established. A not very large and rather flexible organisational structure would be then enough, and the ECPC could later specialise in practical peace-making measures such as arbitration and confidence-building between the warring parties, humanitarian aid, reintegration (inter alia by disarming and demobilising former combatants), rehabilitation, reconstruction and monitoring and improving the human rights situation. In operational terms, it would be up to the Council and to the Commission to examine and identify cases in which the ECPC could be used.

The above-mentioned report by Mr. Per Gahrton also contains a very detailed list of suggestions concerning possible goals, personnel and structure, preparation, recruitment, deployment, funding and a possible institutional framework for the ECPC. Most of these proposals are still valid. It is now up to both the Commission and the Council to seriously tackle this recommendation by the EP and to take action. A potentially extremely powerful civilian instrument of conflict prevention is at stake.

V International co-operation: a stronger relationship with the UN and the OSCE

As the EP has already underlined in its recommendation to the Council on 10 February 1999 on the establishment of a European Civil Peace Corps, ECPC should not, under any circumstance, be intended as an alternative to ordinary peace-keeping missions or give rise to overlapping with organisations already working in the field, such as the OSCE and UNHCR. It should rather complement, when necessary, conflict-prevention actions of a military nature in co-operation with the OSCE and the UN. It is regrettable, for example, that actually one of the main problems of the EU Conflict Prevention mechanism is that reaction time and the ability to deploy personnel and assistance rapidly is low when compared, for example, with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Obviously, closer co-ordination with this latter organisation is in both their interests and could improve, in particular, the current shortcomings of the EU system. Further challenges lie in the fact that, in order to be effective, Conflict Prevention should be complemented by Crises Management and the ambiguous geographical confines of the latter, when compared to the international focus of the Conflict Prevention concept, risks disjunction for the European Union, unless it acts in close relationship with both the UN system and a "case by case" appropriated regional level, with the OSCE heading the list of regional organisations.

It is well known that the OSCE considers itself a primary instrument for early warning and conflict prevention and preventive objectives are incorporated into its structures and field missions. The OSCE brings together civilian police and other civilian experts to carry out operations in an integrated manner. Recently, the OSCE Rapid Expert Assistance and Cooperation Teams (REACT) have become operational. REACT is a facility aimed at rapidly mobilising civilian personnel in twelve fields ranging from human rights media development to administration and support, to civilian police for field deployments. In general terms, the OSCE field mission offers a broad range of expertise including technical support for the maintenance and restoration of law and order, police training and monitoring, mediation, monitoring of peace settlements, the conduct of elections and post-conflict rehabilitation. In addition, even if OSCE lacks the capability of carrying out peace-keeping operations, it nevertheless plays a very useful political role by providing the legal mandate and bringing civilian expertise to multidimensional peace keeping operations. For those reasons, it is now strongly recommended to establish very close operational links between the different institutions and organs who play a role in Conflict Prevention within the EU framework with the above mentioned OSCE REACT mechanism, as well as with the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities, with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, with the OSCE Representative of Media Freedom, as well as with the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre. Additional advantages for the Union derive from the OSCE inclusive membership from Vancouver to Vladivostock, from the fact that OSCE Member States can deal with issues affecting Euro-Atlantic security on an equal footing, as well as from the fact that the absence of rigid political structures allow the OSCE to respond quickly and flexibly to breaking political events. It is true that the OSCE makes its decisions by consensus, but once these decisions have been taken, there are excellent prospects for effective implementation. The EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts is not very concrete as far as the relationship between the EU and the OSCE is concerned, since it declares only that the EU will intensify its exchange of information and practical cooperation with the OSCE. From our point of view that would imply, in any case, a closer collaboration of the EU institutions and organs with the OSCE High Commissioner for National Minorities,

with the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, with the OSCE Representative of Media Freedom, as well as with the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre.

16 October 2001

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy

on the communication from the Commission on conflict prevention
(COM(2001) 211 – C5-0458/2001 – 2001/2182(COS))

Draftsman: Hans-Georg Modrow

PROCEDURE

The Committee on Development and Cooperation appointed Hans-Georg Modrow draftsman at its meeting of 25 June 2001.

It considered the draft opinion at its meetings of 13 September and 11 October 2001.

At the latter meeting it adopted the following conclusions unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Joaquim Miranda, chairman; Lone Dybkjær, vice-chairman; Margrietus J. van den Berg, vice-chairman; Hans-Georg Modrow, draftsman; Teresa Almeida Garrett (for Stavros Xarchakos), Marie-Arlette Carlotti, Nirj Deva, Concepció Ferrer (for Vitaliano Gemelli), Roger Helmer (for Hervé Novelli), Karin Junker, Bashir Khanbhai, Glenys Kinnock, Karsten Knolle, Wolfgang Kreissl-Dörfler, Paul A.A.J.G. Lannoye, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Didier Rod, Francisca Sauquillo Pérez del Arco, Bob van den Bos, Anders Wijkman (for Domenico Mennitti) and Jürgen Zimmerling.

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

Development is possible only where people live in safety. If violent conflicts, crises and war destroy all the efforts made towards economic and social development, then development cooperation must do everything possible to prevent such crises and help ensure that conflicts are dealt with by peaceful means. This is in its own interest. It is more logical to prevent crises and wars than to limit the suffering and clean up the damage afterwards.

Since the early 1990s, there has not only been an increase in the number of conflicts but such conflicts have also tended to become more intense, claiming more victims and causing more destruction. Disputes have emerged which have a long history and are based on diametrically opposed interests.

In response, during the second half of the 1990s those involved in development policy sought to establish what contribution development cooperation might make to preventing crises and dealing with conflict. After a largely academic debate, in spring 2001 the Swedish Presidency officially placed conflict prevention at the centre of discussions, and, in view of the problems facing Central Africa the Belgian Presidency now intends to transform the programme of objectives into a concrete action programme.

The Commission communication is a useful starting point, but the possibilities offered by technical cooperation as a contribution to peace-keeping still need to be assessed in more practical terms. Development policy instruments would certainly not be able to prevent wars. Nevertheless, the potential offered by specific development policy measures aimed at overcoming the causes of violent conflicts should not be underestimated.

Article 11 of the Cotonou Agreement is a step in the same direction. For the first time, crisis prevention has been included in the text of an agreement.

In its communication, the Commission describes how the Union can foster stability in developing countries through a coherent development policy approach in which conflict prevention is integrated in development policy programmes and, in particular, the country strategy papers. The Commission describes how support for democracy, the rule of law and civil society plays a key role in crisis prevention. Political dialogue with the developing countries and the optimisation of cooperation with other donor countries and international organisations are to help ensure a lasting and more effective approach based on preventive measures. As regards sectoral policies, the Commission intends to take greater account of preventive measures in the fight against drugs, the elimination of small arms, the proper use of natural resources, population flows and health policy. Nevertheless, the mainstreaming approach as an alternative to the creation of a new 'crisis prevention' sector poses the risk that no assessable practical action will follow. Adding a small dose of environmental policy, women's rights or crisis prevention to all projects does not lead to any improvement in the specific development policy objective. Consequently, the approach can be given only qualified approval.

The Commission communication contains a detailed list of recommendations for mainstreaming in existing policies. These recommendations are to be welcomed but remain over-general in some areas. Proposals for practical action are lacking. Consequently, the

Committee on Development and Cooperation suggests that greater attention be paid to the following areas with a view to arriving quickly at action programmes which it is possible to implement.

The main sectors concerned are:

- Research into peace and the causes of conflict
- Support for democracy and the rule of law
- Reforming the security sector
- Conflict and post-conflict management
- Gender mainstreaming
- Further action on small arms at international level
- CIMIC and cooperation with humanitarian aid programmes.

CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Development and Cooperation calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following points in its motion for a resolution:

- Congratulates the Commission on the initiative to include conflict prevention in country strategy papers and on drawing up, in this framework, a conflict prevention handbook for the end of 2001;
- Considers it necessary, in the light of the attacks in the US, to analyse the causes of international terrorism and its interrelationships more thoroughly than has been the case to date, in line with its resolutions, to step up necessary security measures, and to combat factors which trigger conflicts, such as social injustices, repression and the forcible curbing of sovereign rights;
- Considers that political dialogue in the context of national strategies for peace is a vital component in preventing conflict, since it permits insight into the underlying causes, which is essential when it comes to devising and promoting conflict prevention strategies; calls accordingly on the Commission to place particular emphasis on analysing factors which cause, or may cause, confrontation and tension, such as the lack of democratic structures, the struggle for control over natural resources, or poverty;
- Stresses the importance of emergency aid, rehabilitation and development cooperation as instruments of conflict prevention and backs the Commission's intention of providing for an analysis of conflict potential in country strategy papers, but voices its concern at the trend towards shifting the focus of external-action funds from developing countries to regions closer to the EU, one ground for concern being the fact that it is precisely in the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, where most conflicts in the world take place; therefore advocates a balanced approach under which aid to one region is not provided at the expense of aid to another;

- In an attempt to strengthen international legal measures of conflict prevention and resolution over military escalation, calls on the Council and the Commission to launch an international campaign for the ratification by all countries of the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court without delay;
- In view of recent events, calls on the Council to urgently come forward with a common position and a joint action on vigorous reform of the UN bodies;
- Stresses the importance of integrating political and conflict prevention objectives in the country support strategies; considers it necessary to ensure that their design and implementation is an inclusive process which actively seeks the views of a wide range of national and local NGOs and civil society, composed of organisations and associations, religious institutions and media, and business interests;
- Urges the establishment of mechanisms to enable regular consultation and exchange with both state and non-state actors and broaden the process of national consultations by ensuring that some of these take place outside national capitals, involving a broad range of community organisations;
- Stresses the need to support democracy and the principles of the rule of law and to promote reconciliation and integration; and regards cooperation with local associations, (international) NGOs and women's groups as essential to that end; calls on the Commission to develop specific mechanisms to secure the involvement of civil society in projects and programmes;
- Considers it necessary for development cooperation aid to be focused on the most impoverished regions in order to promote balanced socio-economic development whose benefits extend to the poorest communities irrespective of ethnicity;
- Calls on the Commission and Council to guide international trade negotiations towards safeguarding the genuine right of States to regulate the activities of transnational businesses on their territories and, within the United Nations, to relaunch the initiatives needed to force those businesses to observe human rights;
- Urges the Commission to work with EU Member States to help developing countries to train and restructure their security forces so that respect for human rights, the rule of law, good governance and democratic standards is upheld, and that intelligence and analysis is shared in order to halt trafficking in drugs and weapons, corruption, diamond smuggling, etc., which play an extremely significant role in causing, aggravating or prolonging crises;
- Calls on the Commission to assess different ways of distinguishing between conflict prevention and conflict and post-conflict management, since in practice the divisions between the two are fluid; considers it vital to support specific projects relating to the demobilisation and social reintegration of regular troops, rebels and in particular child soldiers, grieving and reconciliation and thereby of ushering in a lasting stabilisation process; accordingly regards it as particularly important that, in regions emerging from a conflict situation, non-structural measures be taken or other dynamics be brought into play, such as, for example, education-for-peace programmes, allowing a change of

outlook and psychological attitude on the part of communities which have been prey to armed conflict;

- Stresses the need to make civil societies a lever for peace-making by involving the entire private sector (NGOs, private firms, trade unions, the media, churches, and women's or youth associations) in genuine education for peace; stresses in this connection the importance of women's movements in bringing peace to regions hit by conflict and therefore calls on the Commission specifically to involve women in its peace strategy, in particular in relation to the creation of peace constituencies, peace negotiations and the disarming of male gangs. The targeted use of women's potential should be supported through appropriate projects both in the area of crisis prevention and the settlement of unresolved conflicts and in the post-conflict situation, given that women, as experience has shown, wish no longer to be passive victims but are in a position to intervene in a conflict actively and positively; in this process, there must be no neglect of the priority attention they need, given that they are one of the most vulnerable groups and suffer the consequences of underdevelopment;
- Calls on the Commission to promote the role of women as an essential factor in society in the less developed countries, with effective policies, in defence of the rights of women, all spheres of their education and their health;
- Reiterates the importance of systematically destroying weapons stockpiles from conflicts in order to break the cycle of violence in which weapons from a conflict which is abating are recycled to fuel other centres of conflict;
- Reiterates its position that greater efforts are needed to lay down Community provisions on control of legal trade in handguns and light weapons plus effective EU controls to combat and eradicate the trade in, and smuggling of, such weapons, so that the transfer of (illegal) weapons and arms from industrialised countries to developing countries is reduced and disarmament developing countries, for example by analogy with the 'food for weapons' programme in Mozambique, can help bring about a tangible improvement in public security in those countries; calls for support for stockpile management and programmes to destroy surplus stocks;
- Welcomes the progress achieved towards bolstering Member States' arms control policies, in accordance with the European Union code of conduct adopted in 1998, and calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to put all their weight behind the adoption of an international code of conduct, under the auspices of the United Nations, on arms transactions; urges that this issue be systematically be made part of the transatlantic agenda;
- Calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to play a more active role in combating anti-personnel mines by firmly committing themselves to the universalisation of the Ottawa Convention adopted in 1997, which has now been signed by 141 states and ratified by 119, to prohibit the use, production, stockpiling and transfer of anti-personnel landmines;

- Recommends that the Commission should not only cooperate in general terms with other international organisations, in particular the experienced UN bodies, Bretton Woods institutions, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and EU Member States' development agencies, but, given its status as the world's foremost donor, should also take on the leadership which befits it (along with OCHA and UNHCR) in order to develop models for practical cooperation on the spot, especially with regard to Civilian Military Cooperation (CIMIC) and cooperation with humanitarian aid organisations so that frictions and energy-sapping conflicts of competence can be avoided and synergies encouraged;
- Calls on the Commission to take more account of the experience of international and local civil organisations in defining and implementing its peacekeeping and reconstruction programmes;
- Draws attention to the conflict situations linked to the use of natural resources such as oil, forests, etc. and welcomes the Commission's focus on water resources, but stresses the need to support local, regional and national programmes to prevent conflict over resources and calls for increased efforts to be made towards sustainable development and due attention to be paid to land reform;
- Is alarmed by the financing of civil wars in Africa through the sale of conflict diamonds, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to develop suitable international, European and national instruments in order to make it possible to certify and identify diamonds and carry out independent control of diamond imports; also voices its alarm at the findings in recent United Nations reports on the use of natural resources such as oil, coltan and tropical hardwoods as a source of funding for conflicts in Africa;
- Urges the Commission to regularly publish a 'positive' list displaying examples of successful conflict prevention;
- Calls on the Commission to promote an international code of conduct for transnational firms and financial consortia operating in Europe, and also in areas of conflict, on the connection between those firms' activities in areas of conflict and the direct and indirect fuelling of conflicts;
- Notes that the programmes of international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank have had a destabilising effect in developing countries, in a number of cases, and calls on the Commission and the Member States to encourage action to make conflict prevention an integral component of analysis and planning by these international financial institutions.