



**ANNUAL HIGH-LEVEL MEETING BETWEEN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE,
THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE,
THE UNITED NATIONS AND PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
IN THE “TRIPARTITE-PLUS” FORMAT**

Joint Communiqué

1. High-level representatives of the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the United Nations met on 4-5 July 2006 in Geneva for their annual consultations in the “Tripartite-Plus” format.¹
2. The meeting focused on a central theme: Peacebuilding from a European regional perspective: preventing the recurrence of conflict.
3. *Participants* confirmed their commitment to preventing the outbreak or recurrence of conflicts as the most sustainable way of building peace in Europe. They exchanged views and experience on concrete modalities of conflict prevention on the basis of values shared by the three organizations. They underscored the importance of dialogue and practical cooperation at the governmental, parliamentary and regional and local level, and with civil society.
4. *Participants* identified, discussed and evaluated the impact of cooperation between their respective organizations in peacebuilding. They searched for ways in which to enhance security through multilateral peacebuilding. They reviewed cooperation in the field with a view to promoting reconstruction and long-term development and determined criteria and benchmarks of progress in peacebuilding. Participants focused on practical recommendations that could enhance their own activities and could be helpful to the international community as it embarked on its new approach to implementing post-conflict peacebuilding.
5. *Participants* welcomed the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission, which was called upon to propose integrated strategies for stabilization, economic recovery and development. Ideally, the Commission would bring together all relevant actors in peacebuilding early in the negotiating phase of a peace agreement to ensure effective implementation and avoid duplication of efforts.

¹ The meeting was the 14th in a series initiated in July 1993. The annual discussions – which are chaired and hosted in turn by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe (CoE) and the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG) on behalf of the United Nations – are intended to share information and improve practical cooperation by drawing on each other’s expertise and know-how. Over time, the agenda has widened, from an essentially humanitarian emphasis, to fields related to human rights, conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding. The number of participating organizations has also increased, so that consultations are informally referred to as the “Tripartite-plus” process. The European Commission (EC), the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union (EU), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), who participate as affiliated members, have now been joined by the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). A wide range of representatives from the UN system – including Secretariat departments and offices, UN field presences in the wider Europe, and the funds, programmes and specialized agencies – also participated.

6. *Participants* agreed that in order to be effective and lasting, post-conflict peacebuilding needed to comprise a number of aspects: political settlement, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, reconstruction, security and public order, improvement of intercommunity relations, sustainable economic and social development, protection and recovery of natural resources and promotion of environmental governance, institution- and capacity-building, good governance, security system reform, democratisation, the rule of law, human rights and civil society development.

7. *Participants* identified a number of obstacles to more effective peacebuilding:

- Often, there is a lack of sustained political support by the international community for long-term peacebuilding after the signing of a peace agreement.
- The mandates given to the United Nations and regional organizations are not always supported by adequate capacities and resources.
- The resources for peacebuilding are limited, often drawn from the same pool of funds provided by Member States for other activities.
- Duplication of activities by different international organizations could also be an obstacle to effective peacebuilding.
- There is an inherent contradiction in peacebuilding. On the one hand, effective peacebuilding requires the long-term engagement of the international community. On the other hand, there is always the danger of making a society permanently dependent on humanitarian and development assistance.

8. *Participants* concurred on the following:

- An effective peacebuilding strategy must address the country-specific root causes of conflict.
- Peacebuilding has a fundamentally political character. The different components of a peacebuilding strategy should contribute to the overall goal of preventing the outbreak or recurrence of conflict.
- Peacebuilding is essentially a home-grown process, supported by the international community, but aimed ultimately at promoting national self-reliance.
- The international community should reach out to local stakeholders, in order to determine priorities, build political consensus, establish country-specific groups and put in place a long-term peacebuilding strategy.
- This strategy should also take into account the specific needs of women, and of vulnerable groups, including children, refugees, internally displaced persons and minorities.
- Regional organizations are assets and allies in peacebuilding, and have special roles to play in peacebuilding – political, security, economic, development and human rights among others.
- The United Nations and regional organizations should cooperate more closely in sharing information in order to better analyse and understand the roots, dynamics and ultimate objectives of peacebuilding. Moreover, the experience of relevant regional organisations, and

in particular the existing monitoring mechanisms, should be used more frequently in order to examine and contribute to the development of the peacebuilding process.

- The United Nations and Regional Organizations need to also cooperate on sharing experiences as to lessons learnt and best practices.
- The efforts of the United Nations and regional organizations should be well coordinated by consulting, when appropriate, relevant actors, in order to ensure that they complement each other.

9. *Participants* reviewed and approved the outcome of the Expert-Level Meeting on “Intercommunity relations in post conflict environments: learning to live together”. This meeting reviewed experiences and lessons learnt in the field as well as through sustained contacts of specialized personnel at the level of headquarters of the respective participating organizations. The meeting also identified confidence-building measures, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security system reform, reform of the judiciary, institution-building, and implementation of the rule of law as pivotal for the promotion of intercommunity dialogue in broken societies. Participants concluded that effective intercommunity confidence-building measures were essential for institution- and capacity-building. Improving intercommunity relations in post conflict societies should be based not only on clearly stated commitments but also on systematic long-term monitoring of their implementation (see Annex).

10. *Participants* agreed to transmit the findings and practical recommendations of the meeting to the 7th High-Level Meeting between the United Nations and Regional Organizations, to be convened by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in New York next September, and to the Peacebuilding Commission, as a practical contribution to support its work.

11. It was agreed that the next Tripartite meeting would be hosted by the OSCE in early 2007.

Palais des Nations, Geneva
Wednesday, 5 July 2006

Annex

CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY TO THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE EXPERT-LEVEL MEETING ON PEACEBUILDING FROM A EUROPEAN REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE: AVOIDING THE RECURRENCE OF CONFLICT

1. The Expert-level Meeting discussed the theme “Intercommunity Relations in Post-Conflict Environments: Learning to live together”. This meeting reviewed field experiences, lessons learned and multidimensional coordination.
2. Participants agreed that a peace agreement may provide for a cessation of hostilities, but the creation of an inclusive political, social, and economic order imbued with the rule of law needs a broader strategy of peacebuilding. The timing, chronology and sequencing of the process are vital to ensure its success.
3. Participants stressed the need to define the root causes of conflict and take into account the specific cultural context as preconditions for a successful intercommunity dialogue. The political will and appropriate funding by the international community are essential to ensure security in post-conflict environments.
4. A social economic dialogue, including the establishment of a sound business environment and good governance, is a basic requirement for consistent economic growth. The foundation of a solid legal framework that regulates the economic activity and resolves land and property disputes is indispensable for sustainable development of the economy. The achievement of livelihood security through decent work initiatives like the “back to work” livelihood concept is a crucial nexus for enduring peace.
5. Better cooperation and coordination of efforts among participating organizations is needed to maximize the impact in the field and avoid duplication of efforts. There is a call for a clear definition of commitments at an early stage and the setting up of an effective mechanism to monitor these commitments. The sustained sharing of risk and vulnerability indicators among stakeholders contributes to early warning and the prevention of a recurrence of conflict.
6. Specific confidence-building measures were identified, such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security system reform, reform of the judiciary, institution-building, constitutional reform, electoral assistance, human rights education, cultural heritage, and the implementation of the rule of law as the basis for the promotion of intercommunity dialogue in broken societies. The UN is to lead in the mapping of all peacebuilding instruments and activities.
7. Participants agreed that while general lessons can be drawn from experience, no two countries are identical. Therefore, any state-building strategy must be tailor-made and include the development of institutions at the local, national and regional levels, in order to provide the local ownership and momentum. It was deemed useful to devise and elaborate principles and guidelines that could be universally applicable to peacebuilding operations.
8. The field experience in the Balkans, Cyprus, Caucasus and Central Asia indicates that internal and external actors can undermine effective inter-community confidence-building measures. Traditional spoilers such as factions and warlords have now been joined by a new set of trans-national elements including criminal networks and terrorists as well as the “invisible hand”, or “presence”. Policies that seek to neutralize them are essential tools to prevent the recurrence of armed conflict.
9. Rule of law issues need a broad review and integration into the coordination mechanism. Experts from Kosovo, Cyprus, Georgia and Tajikistan pointed out that the rule of law and respect for

human rights provide the glue that binds communities together and is the basis of any society that intends to learn to live together.

10. In addition, the following specific recommendations were agreed:

- The issue of missing persons needs to be addressed as well as the plight of vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons, refugees and minorities. The participation of women and young people is critical in any post-conflict dialogue. In this context the laws on statelessness, citizenship and nationality have to be reviewed. Appropriate follow up of war crimes is essential.
- The preservation and reconstruction of cultural heritage is important for a common identity of local populations. Education in the mother tongue for minorities is a crucial factor in peacebuilding, as are appropriate communications and the role of the media, both inside and outside the country.
- Conflicts affect the environment, which can have destabilizing consequences for the population. Therefore, any peacebuilding initiative needs an environmental dimension.
- Reform of the police and military contributes to building trust. DDR and security system reform are essential for an integrated strategy. The international community needs to focus on the reintegration of former combatants. Reintegration of refugees is a precondition for stability and implementation of a peace agreement. The timing and sequencing of the whole process is essential.
- The OHCHR country and thematic Rapporteur system is an essential tools to ensure compliance with human rights standards.
- The meeting recommends to the High-level Meeting to put Central Asia high on the political agenda, since concerted action of all actors is essential in that region.
- The involvement of parliamentarians and civil society is central to any peacebuilding process.

Palais des Nations, Geneva
Tuesday, 4 July 2006