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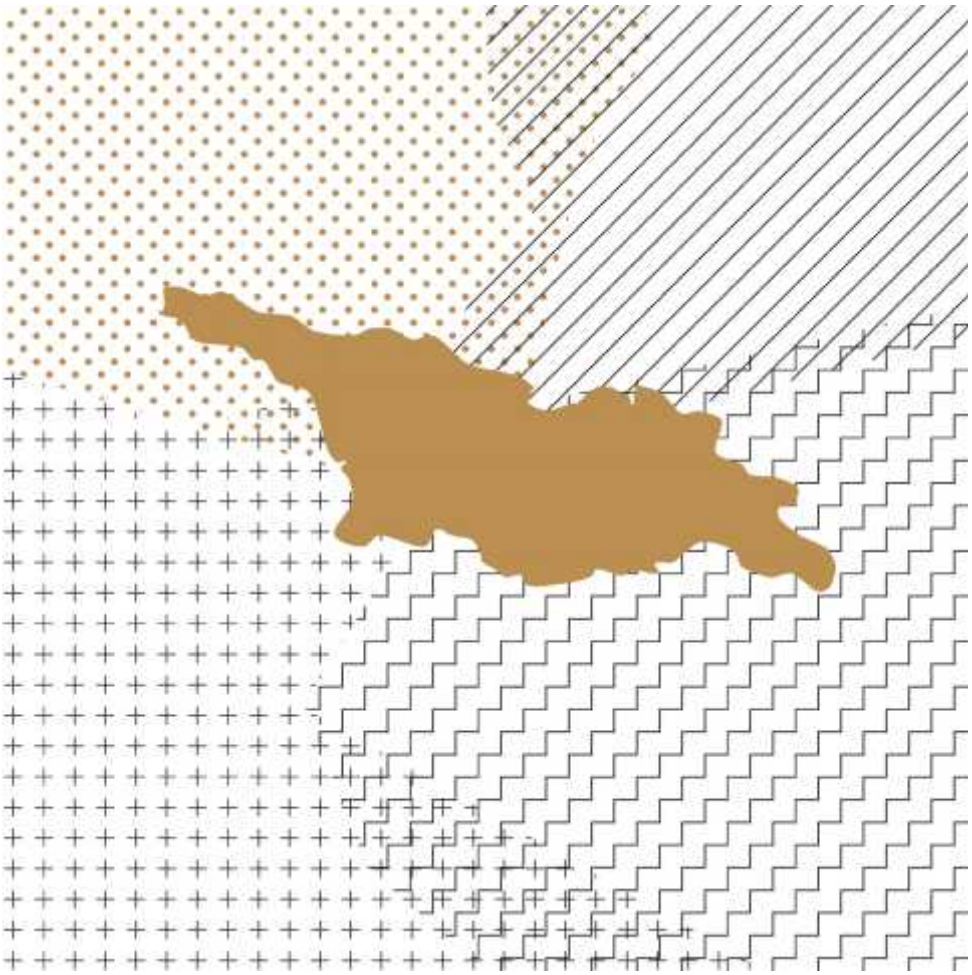

Strengthening Conflict Prevention: Recommendations for the EU - Policy Roundtable Georgia

Tbilisi, May 2017

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The Policy Recommendations Document prepared by Ms. Nina Tsikhistavi-Khutsishvili, Director, International Center on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN).
Special thanks to Dr. Nana Macharashvili, TSU and Dr. Tariel Sikharulidze, ESSEC IRENÉ for the contributions made to the Policy Recommendations Document.

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The Case Study Report on Georgia prepared by
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Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding (WOSCAP)

The Policy Recommendations Document elaborated based on the Case Study Report on Georgia by Ms. Nina Tsikhistavi-Khutsishvili, Director, International Center on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN). Contributions to the document made by Dr. Nana Macharashvili, TSU and Dr. Tariel Sikharulidze, ESSEC IRENÉ. The aim of the Policy Recommendation Document is to complement and adjust existing capacities, policies, and initiatives for conflict prevention and peacebuilding, through an inclusive policy-practice dialogue and participation on all levels.

The Case Study Report on Georgia "The EU's Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Interventions in Georgia" was produced as part of the project "*Whole-of-Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding*" (WOSCAP) by Dr. Nana Macharashvili, Dr. Ekaterine Basilaia, Dr. Nikoloz Samkharade, Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University.

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Acronyms

GPPAC	The Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts
GID	Geneva International Discussions
COBERM	Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DCFTA	Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area
EaP	Eastern Partnership
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
ENPI	European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument
EU	European Union
EUMM	Monitoring Mission of the European Union
ICCN	International Center on Conflict and Negotiation
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IPRM	Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism
MTD	Multi-Track Diplomacy
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
TSU	Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOMIG	United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
UN SC RES	UN Security Council Resolution
WOSCAP	Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

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About the WOSCAP project

WOSCAP (Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding) is a project aimed at enhancing the capabilities of the EU to implement conflict prevention and peacebuilding interventions through sustainable, comprehensive and innovative civilian means. It assesses current capabilities, and identifies gaps, best practices, lessons learned and research priorities.

Through a community of practice and dialogue forums, it also brings together policymakers, civilian and military practitioners, academic experts and the beneficiaries of EU interventions. It will result in a tailored set of recommendations on the policy priorities and information and communication technologies needed for effective civilian conflict prevention.

International peacebuilding interventions face two central challenges. Firstly, there is the issue of coordination and synergy in the field, due to an increasing range of national, regional and international actors involved in peacebuilding. Secondly, there is the necessity to ensure interventions are relevant to and owned by local populations to be more effective in the long term. These challenges are inherent to international peacebuilding interventions, and are also pertinent to institutions such as the EU in seeking to improve their policies and instruments.

The WOSCAP project focuses on practical approaches and tools that can enable the EU to make its interventions more coherent and sustainable. These include means of engagement and collaboration between different stakeholder groups; use of innovative tools and methods to facilitate such engagement; strategies that build on local capacities and priorities for conflict prevention; and actions that support capacity enhancement of the EU and its partners in this endeavour.

About the Policy Recommendations Document

The Policy Recommendations Document was prepared by International Center on Conflict and Negotiation (ICCN) based on the Case Study Report on Georgia “The EU's Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Interventions in Georgia” and constitutes one of the main working results of the project “Whole-of-Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding” (WOSCAP). The document combines the Case Study Report on Georgia research finding that are followed by the relevant recommendations.

The Case Study Report on Georgia “The EU's Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Interventions in Georgia” of Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University was produced as part of the project “Whole-of-Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding” (WOSCAP). The research findings are focused on the EU’s interventions in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Georgia. The report covers the period from 2008 until now and focuses on three cases: The European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM), the Geneva International Discussions (GID), and Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism (COBERM). These cases were chosen as they correspond to the three types of the EU interventions the project focuses on: Multi-track Diplomacy, Security Sector Reform and Governance Reform. Further, it focuses on possible areas for improvement and recommendations regarding the EU capabilities.

EU capabilities of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM), the Geneva International Discussions (GID) and the EU-UNDP programme Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism (COBERM) analysed in the Case Study, confirm the importance and need for more effective and efficient application of the horizontal as well as vertical coordination mechanisms.

The Policy Recommendations Document in the following sections is focused on the peacebuilding functions of EU capabilities as of general context analysis of Georgian whole society in peace-building processes. It then provides with three priority areas for peace-building that were identified in the course of the Case study on Georgia and addresses particular recommendations relevant to these areas to Georgian civil society, the Government of Georgia and EU together with international stakeholders, donors active in the country. Recommendations that cut across 4 priority areas are listed in separate sections below.

Added value of the Policy Recommendation Document is connected to the argument concerning the need to better anticipate the increased complexity of the field of mediation and dialogue support. The field as such is marked both by a horizontal expansion of multilateral actors engaged in peace-making, and by a vertical expansion of non-state actors playing complementary roles to formal diplomacy, and sometimes acquiring mediation roles themselves.

We hope that the present document, as a result of discussions and cooperation within the programme partners, will prove useful to its addressees. Follow-up activities to disseminate its recommendations are planned, both within Georgia and in the European Union, after the end of this project.

Priority Areas: Policy Recommendations and Summary Results of the Case Study on Georgia

Relations between Georgia and the European Union can be classified into three phases. The first phase starts at the beginning of the 1990s. The second phase starts with the 2003 Rose Revolution and is characterized by the intensification of EU-Georgian relations. The 2008 war propelled EU-Georgian relations into a third phase, in which peacebuilding aspects acquired a prominent role. Together with significant support for governance reforms in the framework of Pre-Accession (IPA), Association Agreements, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), and Eastern Partnership (EaP), the European Union is especially relevant to the post-2008 conflict prevention, management and resolution in the context of human rights and democracy promotion in Georgia. Especially after the departure of United Nations Observer Mission (UNOMIG) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2009, the EU's strategic importance in Georgia increased significantly, with the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) becoming the sole officially mandated international peace mission operating in Georgia. Furthermore, EU assistance provided to the conflict-affected people in Georgia has also been crucial in mitigating some of the negative impacts of the conflict while helping to restore trust among different parties. EU support remains a very significant contribution today.

The Policy Recommendations Document focused on three ongoing EU interventions in Georgia in the field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, identified as the most relevant, significant and substantial interventions in this field. The three interventions are the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM), the Geneva International Discussions (GID), and the joint EU-UNDP programme Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism (COBERM). The EU and its member states cannot be the only actors promoting conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Still others consider that the EU has to reformulate its security strategy in order to include Georgia and the surrounding region as an extension of Europe.

European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM)

The EUMM is currently the most concrete instrument used for conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Georgia. With its role in this mission, the EU is identified as a deterrent force, one that ensures the non-resumption of hostilities, the prevention of kidnapping and assault on individuals leaving the areas adjacent to the administrative boundary lines with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. EUMM gets active only in ad-hoc situations when there is a crisis and immediate involvement becomes necessary. Even if EUMM has limited power to operate on the other side of the boundary line, inside the breakaway regions themselves, its impact is still very significant.

Despite Case Study on Georgia assesses EU civilian capabilities in the framework of the EUMM in a relatively positive way, some contradictions and shortcomings are nonetheless highlighted. The EUMM's focus on stabilization, normalization and confidence-building mandates is concretised mostly through activities that can be classified under multi-track diplomacy. The EUMM activities and strategies support unofficial dialogue and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships between authorities and civil society leaders, while also contributing to people-to-people interactions at the grassroots level to help build confidence between communities. The link of EUMM with Security Sector Reform or Governance Reform issues is, as of yet, very limited.

The Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM) is assessed as the most successful mechanism by all stakeholders within and outside the country. These meetings offer an opportunity for all participants to discuss events and incidents, and to raise concerns on the security situation and the conditions for the civilian population. The EUMM's participation in this mechanism also effectively turns the mission into an important political player in the conflict with the function to mediate and resolve various small and, at the same time, significant topics (including kidnappings and personal assaults). The information sharing meetings organised by the EUMM with representatives of NGOs are considered a key forum for EUMM monitoring updates in Western Georgia, and constitute a clear indication that local ownership is being exercised.

Recommendations: Increasing Human Security in Conflict-Affected Areas

To civil society:

- Conduct in-depth needs assessments with regard to human security issues and prepare recommendations on how to effectively address these needs;
- Actively engage in human rights monitoring and provide the information to EUMM;
- Provide information to civilian population as well on security measures and disaster preparedness;

To the Government of Georgia:

- Elaborate targeted and consistent approaches towards the peaceful settlement of conflicts and towards conflict transformation, taking into account assessments elaborated by independent national and EU experts;
- Provide transparent, unbiased and objective information to the affected population about possible security risks and threats, based also on early warning systems and threat assessments provided by CSOs and in cooperation with EUMM;
- Elaborate emergency strategies and plans and disseminate them, with the support of CSOs, among the population;

- Intensify participatory dialogue with EUMM through involvement of CSOs on human-security issues to improve planning and implementation of measures that increase human security in high-risk areas;
- Maintain dialogue on the international level, including with the relevant INGOs, on human security problems in Georgia;

To EU and international donor Stakeholders:

- Increase CSO involvement in threat assessment and analysis regarding human security, including in the establishment and strengthening of people-centred early warning systems by providing necessary financial assistance to SCO;
- Encourage CSOs in order to conduct needs assessments on human security to be presented at information sharing meetings organised by the EUMM;
- Together with CSOs organise informational campaigns to civilian population on security measures;
- Provide financial assistance to CSOs to research and develop recommendations on all aspects of human security;
- EUMM should be more sensitive and pay more attention to IDP's needs and respond to those needs in cooperation with the government of Georgia. Such a support will provide a positive image of the EU in the IDP community;
- EUMM should strengthen its' visibility in Georgian society to eradicate existing loopholes and information gaps about their activities;
- EUMM mission should get a longer renewable mandate (3-5 years) to send a strong signal to parties about the EU's involvement in conflict resolution in Georgia. This long-term engagement will equally promote the continuation of conflict prevention mechanism that is judged to be necessary.

Geneva International Discussions

The Geneva International Discussions (GID) is almost the only diplomatic platform functioning around the conflict in Georgia. Even though the conflict has evolved into a kind of deadlock, the platform offers a venue for diplomats, politicians and decision-makers to exchange information and address certain ad hoc issues. Nonetheless, GID has not been able to find diplomatic solutions to the conflict. The EU capacity within the GID format is seen by most research participants as restricted. The elite character of the platform and its lack of transparency constitute important restrictions, particularly from the perspective of local civil society organisations.

The "statehood" of the breakaway regions of the Abkhazian and South Ossetian de facto states is heavily dependent on Russia in military, financial and political terms. Therefore, the de facto authorities do not have a room for independent action. Representatives of the de facto authorities furthermore do not trust the EU as an impartial broker, because the EU adheres to the principle of territorial integrity of Georgia. Therefore, the de facto authorities follow the script provided by Moscow and are unwilling to compromise on the change of the status-quo. Hence, EU's capabilities in this process are quite weak. The Geneva Talks and the EU mediation in these should thus be understood mainly as a prevention tool of a new conflict between Georgia and Russia. One of the challenges for the implementation of the EU goals in the GID is to broaden people's understanding of the security dimension. It is not just about tanks and weapons, but it needs to be understood as what the EU calls 'human security'. GID help solve some non-political issues based on mutually profitable cooperation, as it did recently in relation to bug problems in Abkhazia. In such cases, the EU could

also consider facilitating funding for such initiatives as a way to enhance the leverage of the GID. Therefore, despite the fact that the Geneva talks ultimately did not produce any success in the conflict resolution process, the mere fact that it exists as a venue where the conflicting sides can meet and discuss conflict-related issues regularly, still proves that it is an important mechanism that needs to be sustained.

Recommendations: Widening the Spectrum of Negotiations, Dialogue and Discussions Among the Conflicting Parties

To civil society:

- Support, and participate in public debate on conflict resolution strategies;
- Provide society and donor stakeholders with objective and unbiased analyses of the current situation;
- Provide the Government of Georgia with recommendations on the peace process and promote non-discriminatory approaches towards the involvement of civil society actors in the public discourse on conflict resolution through the preparation of independent policy papers and policy briefs;
- Generate and evaluate innovative ideas on conflict resolution, based on international expertise and practical experience of working with conflict-affected populations;
- Promote and deliver awareness raising and training of media representatives on peace-building.
- Identify and engage in opportunities for "Multi-Track Diplomacy";

To the Government of Georgia:

- Increase the flow of objective and current information on the state of conflict-resolution processes under GID and the situation in the conflict-afflicted areas;
- Develop an explicit agenda of negotiations for GID that is developed in consultation with civil society experts and is shared and accepted within Georgian society;
- Involve opposition parties in building a consensus on conflict resolution strategies in Georgia;
- Apart from GID and "Abashidze-Karasin Bilateral Dialogue" channels seek and initiate other formats of contacts and negotiations in order to maintain the peace process;

To EU and international donor Stakeholders:

- Support the dialogue between conflicting parties by promoting and increasing the funding for the involvement of a broader spectrum of CS actors, such as independent experts, young people, women etc.
- Support the creation of analytical capacity in Georgian Government and civil society for conflict research and analysis as well as the development of conflict resolution and confidence building methodologies;
- EU should more actively invite Non-EU States of UN and OSCE area to effectively influence, promote and Empower knowledge and experience-sharing in the field of conflict resolution and reconciliation between civil society actors from Georgia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Russia.

The joint EU-UNDP programme Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism (COBERM)

The EU-UNDP joint programme Confidence Building Early Response Mechanism (COBERM) invests in grassroots dialogue and trust building. Different stakeholders inside Georgia generally evaluate this programme as useful and positive, since it is able to stimulate people-to-people contact across

conflict divides, and to generate increased capacities within communities, as well as CSOs to mediate political differences in constructive ways. However, measures are needed to make the programme more permeable to new actors and to allow it to increase its impact beyond the small groups that have been participating thus far.

The **COBERM** programme exemplifies the difficulties involved in the process of planning, implementing and evaluating EU whole-of-society conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts from the programme-level perspective. By comparing a range of assessments of different stakeholders regarding the operational level intervention of EU, the case study draws out the dilemmas of local engagement in a context in which ownership by one party in the conflict is detrimental to the possibilities of trust and ownership of the other party. The political intricacies of the EU's attempted identification as a neutral and impartial actor in the framework of COBERM reflect the dilemmas of EU engagement in a conflict so close to its own borders and sphere of influence. This is reflected particularly in the strong divergence of perceptions of local and international stakeholders regarding COBERM's performance and impact.

Recommendations: Increasing People-to-People Contacts

To civil society:

- Make sure that civil society-supported people-to-people contacts involve broad sections of society and do not become merely "expert-to-expert" contacts. Promote, for instance, the joint celebrations of traditional holidays, such as the joint Khatobas' celebration of Georgians and Ossetians;
- Work on identifying common interests of people across the conflict lines, such as in sports, art, health, environment, the professions etc and counter attempts at politicisation of joint activities in these spheres;
- Set up mechanisms for CSOs to regularly exchange information on and coordinate the various initiatives to foster dialogue processes and people-to-people contacts;
- Establish and strengthen cooperation with CSOs in Abkhazia and South Ossetia to encourage people-to-people contacts through, for instance, academic and cultural exchanges or summer peace camps;

To the Government of Georgia:

- Remove obstacles to people-to-people contacts and to civil society projects promoting these contacts through, inter alia, a review of legislation, including the Law of Georgia on Occupied Territories, regulating travel permits and legitimate small-scale economic cooperation as well as through the provision of scholarships for Abkhaz and South Ossetian young people willing to study in Georgia etc.
- Accept the advice and training offered by civil society groups for government officials on peaceful public discourse;

To EU and international donor Stakeholders:

- Set up civil society coordination meetings to stimulate and improve networking among donors, international NGOs (INGOs) and Georgian CSOs in the area of projects facilitating dialogue processes and people-to-people contacts;
- Encourage the joint participation of women and young people from Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in regional or European summer schools in peace-building and reconciliation and youth camps through, for instance, the provision of stipends;
- Encourage peace education at university levels and encourage cooperation between academics and students through already existent mechanisms like Erasmus;

- Encourage and finance educational projects at school level in peace building and peace studies
- To encourage the development and strengthening of CSO's in breakaway regions;
- Diversify participation for new actors and avoid the same actor/people participation.

WOSCAP cluster perspective - Cross-Cutting Issues

WOSCAP works with five of such cross-cutting themes: Multi-stakeholder coherence, local ownership, gender, civil-military synergies, and information and communication technologies (ICT). The present study provides some input on the aspect of (1) **multi-stakeholder coherence**, while the aspects of (2) **gender**, (3) **ICT**, and (4) **local ownership** are touched upon superficially.

1. Multi-stakeholder coherence: The Case Study on Georgia analysed the EU's choice of partners, the effectiveness of key multilateral relationships, such as with the UN, the OSCE and other regional actors, and the potential for more creative peacebuilding partnerships including civil society and the private sector. When it comes to the EU's future role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, the political will of the EU's leading countries will be decisive. Brussels-based officials consider there is very limited political willingness on the side of the breakaway region and the Tbilisi administration to come to any substantial agreement in the short term. Nonetheless, EU diplomats seem to imply that it is up to the Tbilisi Administration and de-facto leaders from Abkhazia and South Ossetia to move the conflict forward.

Most research participants from Georgia label the EU interventions as driven mostly by inertia. There are differences in opinion, however, on what new modalities could be most useful. From the civil society perspective, it makes sense to think about updating intervention strategies to include more of an educational dimension. The list of alternatives is quite long. Different options depend on the openness of the breakaway regions to consider them. Some consider that the Association Agreement between Georgia and the EU (EU-Georgia AA/DCFTA) might also motivate the breakaway regions to some kind of renewed engagement. From the multi-stakeholder coherence perspective, the EU and the Georgian government officials at times engaged in strategic dialogue regarding the EU policy towards the conflict zones. This kind of engagement included bringing different positions closer together in preparation of rounds of the GID.

Recommendations: Strengthening Equal and Balanced Participation for Multi-stakeholder Coherence

To civil society:

- Update studies on violations of IDPs' human rights (including particularly property rights at their temporary places of residence) and monitor/propose adjustments to measures to remedy these violations;
- Expand existing programmes that disseminate information to IDPs about their rights and protection mechanisms to cover a larger part of settlements;
- Build capacity particularly of young people in IDP settlements and collective centres to self-organise in order to defend their human rights and make their voices heard in society. Further, encourage IDP participation in all local civil society projects;

To the Government of Georgia:

- Set up regular coordination mechanisms with CSOs working on conflict settlement dialogue and peacebuilding for better protection and relief measures for conflict affected civilians.
- Consult with civil society groups regarding all policy approaches and actions identified from the State;
- Set up Peace Council of Conflict Settlement and Peacebuilding with participation of Government and Civil Society representatives to elaborate NAP on Economic Connectivity under Confidence Building Measures for Georgia;

To EU and international donor Stakeholders:

- Set up civil society coordination meetings to stimulate and improve networking among donor stakeholders, international relief agencies and Georgian CSOs;
- Consult with OSCE area Participating States working with conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the development of assistance programmes to draw attention on better Economic Connectivity among breakaway regions of Georgia and South Caucasus;
- Invite UN and OSCE area States for according and expanding influence on more effective conflict prevention and peacebuilding in Georgia and the South Caucasus;
- Provide special grant programmes to CSOs set up Economic Communication guideline for IDPs and to community-based organisations in conflict affected areas and across the ABL and lines of contact.

2. Local ownership: The level of inclusiveness of the EU's interventions differs, but it is particularly limited in the case of Geneva International Discussions, mechanisms which was assessed as very elitist and closed off. To enhance local ownership, there is a strong need for more, and more effective and efficient, application of the horizontal, as well as vertical coordination mechanisms. The Case Study on Georgia underlines the need for increased involvement of non-state actors in the EU interventions. One aspect of this is for the EU to develop better local engagement strategies surrounding its interventions and operations.

Recommendations: Adjustment of Legislation, Strategies and Policies for Broader Ownership

To civil society:

- Create issue-based ad hoc coalitions that are able to assess the adequacy of legislation based on independent expert advice;
- Strengthen those activities that monitor the development and implementation of legislation and provide legal and implementation gap analyses on inclusive participation;
- Foster the capacity for policy analysis and independent expertise through the involvement of women, young activists, particularly students of relevant disciplines, through e.g. offers for internships and volunteering;

To the Government of Georgia:

- Broaden participation of CSOs in inter-governmental working groups that assess the effects of legislative changes and policy strategies in all areas affecting peace-building processes;
- Institute transparent, inclusive and non-discriminatory criteria for the selection and rotation change of civil society members in those working groups;
- Grant public access to key documents affecting peace-building processes (Strategies and Action Plans as well as their drafts), thus making state documents accessible to everyone interested on official websites;
- Provide integrated reports to the public on the ongoing implementation of legislation;

To EU and international donor Stakeholders:

- Make financial support in conflict resolution and peace-building to the Government of Georgia conditional on the involvement of civil society relevant representatives in these processes;
- Provide increased numbers of research grants on policy and legal analysis for relevant civil society organisations;
- Support the drafting of alternative reports by CSOs on the implementation of Action Plans and encourage the Government of Georgia to act on their recommendations.

3. Gender: The Case Study refers to the importance of a gender friendly environment and underlines the importance of UN Security Council Resolution 2122 (2013) on women and peace and security. Women's and girls' empowerment and gender equality are critical to efforts to maintain international peace and security. Persisting barriers to full implementation of UNSCRes 1325 (2000) will only be dismantled through dedicated commitment to women's empowerment, participation, and human rights, and through concerted leadership, consistent information and action, and support, to build women's engagement in all levels of decision-making (United Nations 2013). The EUMM and COBERM comply with gender policy quite adequately, the Geneva International Discussion format, however, is dominated by men, and pays little attention to gender aspects.

Recommendations: Engaging Women and Youth in Peace-Building

To civil society:

- Strengthen research and project implementation capacities in civic education within CSOs;
- Engage women and young people as volunteers in CSOs and give them a perspective for paid work in the civil society sector;
- Identify needs and cooperate with local schools on curricular and extra-curricular activities to promote civic and human rights education. These should include activities on topics such as conflict transformation, peace-building, tolerance etc. and make use of local grassroots CSOs trained through donor-funded projects in peace education;
- Research the needs of women and young people on all sides of the conflict lines, identify common interests and design projects based on those interests and needs;

To the Government of Georgia:

- Review school curricula with CSOs with a view towards making civic and human rights education a mandatory subject for students aged 15+;
- Promote through local education resource centres cooperation between school headmasters and teachers and local civil society in joint projects and extra-curricular activities (e.g. activities on Human Rights Day, World Peace Day; summer camps; community activities etc.);
- Involve CSOs in the development of teaching standards and accredited teacher training programmes for civic and human rights education;
- Promote cross-cultural tolerance in education, for instance by including into literature classes the literary masterpieces of those ethnic groups whose members live in Georgia;

To EU and international donor Stakeholders:

- Promote and fund exchange activities between civil society and pedagogical institutions in EU member states and Georgian CSOs active in civic education and human rights training;
- Link programmes to support and fund educational reform in Georgia with involvement of CSOs in the elaboration of curricula and teacher training programmes;

- Fund summer (peace) camps, summer schools and youth-exchange programmes across regional borders and conflict lines for young people from the South Caucasus.

4. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT): The formal and informal ICT practices by various actors in specific peacebuilding contexts are important. The more proactive ICT strategy in the regions would enhance a smooth and efficient implementation of the activities, though the interventions' performance around ICT represents a good example of the weak strategic vision. There is close surveillance from the local intelligence and authorities on the residents of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which disables free engagement in online activities. Hence, the discussion about ICT for peacebuilding becomes a contentious topic. Nevertheless, there are some potential resources that could be used, i.e. using e-learning formats.

Recommendations: Engaging more ICT for Peace-Building

To civil society:

- Stimulate and foster contacts through the prioritisation of internet communication methodologies in projects, such as video conferencing and joint (cross-boundary line) websites;
- Identify positive examples of harmonious coexistence and friendship, such as mixed (Abkhaz-Georgian and Ossetian-Georgian) families, Facebook friendships etc. and make them visible in society to counter divisive rhetoric;

To the Government of Georgia:

- Cooperate with and, wherever possible, support the online feedback evaluation of GID and EUMM through web forums;
- Promote and foster participation of war affected civilians and CS representatives to argue and validate state activities and programmes planned through ICT;

To EU and international donor Stakeholders:

- Promote and fund exchange and capacity building to journalists and media representatives in conflict-sensitive reporting practices;
- Provide assistance to increase capacity of CSOs in developing effective dialogue with the Government and relevant stakeholders through active use of ICT (e.g. analysing the implementation of Action Plans, providing with relevant agenda for the dialogues, etc.).

About Terminology

The Relevance of Civil Society in Peace-Building Processes - Civil society involvement is one of the most popular concepts in peace-building today. A lively and active civil society is seen as an important element for participative democracy and as a guarantor of human rights. The question in the international debate is not whether civil society has a role to play in peace-building, but how civil society can best realise its valuable contributions. So far, outcomes and impacts of civil society interventions towards peace have only been evaluated to a limited extent.[1] The role of civil society in this field still lacks the empirical evidence necessary to generate valid conclusions about its relevance and effectiveness.[2]

Definition of Civil Society - There is no commonly agreed upon definition beyond the basic idea of civil society being an "arena of un-coerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values".[3] Civil society is thus the public realm between the state, business and family, and consists of a variety of mainly voluntary organisations and associations that maintain different objectives, interests and ideologies. Within civil society organisations there are various organisational structures and actors, whose grade of formalisation, autonomy and influence vary. These may include trade unions and faith-based organisations, women's and youth organisations, neighbourhood committees, professional associations, various social movements, diasporas, research and scientific organisations, independent media, etc.[4] For the purpose of this document, the definition of Th. Paffenholz will be applied, who uses the term "Civil Society" when referring to the general concept or to activities of non-state groups, organisations, associations and movements. Although independence from the state is one of civil society's defining features, civil society closely interacts with the state and is shaped by parameters and frameworks defined by the state. A strong and dynamic civil society requires a functioning, peaceful and democratic state, which does not impede civil society's space and freedom without proper cause.[5]

Legitimacy of Civil Society[6] - The need for involvement of civil society in peace-building is undisputed. Civil society can transmit the general population's needs and interests to political decision-makers and vice versa, which will ensure that there is a connection between the different levels of society. More often than not, however, peace processes lack vertical links within a conflict party. Thus the important question is whom civil society organisations represent and whether they are backed by large groups that give them a mandate to act on their behalf, or whether they make a claim without such an endorsement. A further important issue is whether civil society encompasses only groups with moderate views advocating for civil values, or also those who represent self-serving, violent or fanatic modes of interaction. Examples of successful conflict transformation have shown that sustainable solutions have to take into consideration also the needs, interests and rights of the most marginalised groups/ individuals of a society. Even if civil society is not categorically progressive

[1] Supporting Georgian Civil Society in Peace-Building, ICCN, 2010

[2] Assessing Progress on the Road to Peace: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities. GPPAC Issue Paper No. 5, 2008: And Thania Paffenholz (Ed): Civil Society & Peacebuilding. 2010.

[3] London School of Economics (LSE)'s Centre for Civil Society: http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/what_is_civil_society.htm

[4] Paul Van Tongeren, Malin Brenk, Marte Hellema, Juliette Verhoeven (Eds): People Building Peace II. 2005

[5] Supporting Georgian Civil Society in Peace-Building, ICCN, 2010

[6] Ibidem

and non-violent, non-state actors can play a significant role in conflict transformation, peace-building and furthering democracy. In order to ensure that their actions are furthering, and not endangering, peace-building processes, civil society actors should follow certain principles in their engagement, such as inclusiveness, non-discrimination and participatory approaches.

Definition of Peace-building[7]: A common definition of peace-building as method, concept or approach could not yet be agreed upon. The term is used to refer to preventive diplomacy, preventive development, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. Its scope of tasks include short term emergency relief, long term reconstruction, return and reintegration of refugees, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants and other armed groups, recognition of human rights as well as conduct of elections, constitution of administrative, governmental and judiciary structures (on the basis of the rule of law) and any other actions aiming at sustainable stability and reconciliation.

Whole of Society[8] - It is an approach to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, which pays particular attention to the role of local societies, relationships at policy level and on the ground, with a wide range of stakeholders. It emphasises the importance of inclusivity) of a variety of societal actors and their inter-relations in the analysis of conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives, especially at the local level.

Clusters[9] - They refer to categories of civilian capabilities which relate to different forms of EU intervention. Clusters represent "what" the EU does in its external actions, and what WOSCAP will assess.

1. Security Sector Reform - SSR aims to improve civil-military relations in partner countries. The EU uses the OECD definition of SSR, which aims at "seeking to increase partner countries' ability to meet the range of security needs within their societies in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance, transparency and the rule of law. SSR includes, but extends well beyond, the narrower focus of more traditional security assistance on defence, intelligence and policing" (OECD, 2004). The UN defines security sector reform as "a process of assessment, review and implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of the security sector, led by national authorities, and that has as its goal the enhancement of effective and accountable security for the State and its peoples, without discrimination and with full respect of human rights and the rule of law."

2. Multi-track diplomacy - It describes the web of interconnected activities, individuals and institutions that cooperate to prevent or resolve conflicts peacefully, primarily through (direct or mediated) dialogue and negotiation. The term 'multi-track' refers to interventions targeting multiple levels of society and decision-making simultaneously and in an inter-connected (or at best coordinated) manner. These interventions on different tracks include: Track I: Official discussions between high-level governmental and military leaders focusing on ceasefires, peace talks, treaties and other agreements. Track II: Unofficial dialogue and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships between civil society leaders. Track III: People-to-people interactions at the grassroots level to encourage interaction and understanding between communities through meetings, media

[7] ibidem

[8] WOSCAP (Whole of Society Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding), project funded by the EU's Horizon 2020

[9] ibidem

exposure, political and legal advocacy for marginalized people and communities (Diamond and McDonald 1993; Lederach 1998).

3. Governance - Governance is a set of social, political and private institutions from and beyond government coming together in collective action with the aim and purpose to shape, rule and/or control society and state. Although governance per definition is an act, there can never be any actions without actors behind them. Governance tackles issues about the distribution of power, the actors involved or excluded from the process and the way the agreed rules should be enforced.

Cross-cutting issues / themes[10] - There are thematic policy areas, which inform and distinguish the European Union's approach to intervention, and the goals of its external policies; which are present, or can be applied in multiple categories of EU capabilities and action, and which are underpinned by a set of norms/values. Cross-cutting issues represent "how" the EU seeks to deploy its capabilities, and are entry points/vectors for WOSCAP's qualitative assessment of capabilities. (Local Ownership, Coherence, Gender, ICTs).

Local Ownership - It is a normative concept, which envisages that local people control reform and reconstruction processes in the context of an external intervention. Local ownership is seen as a prerequisite for the legitimacy and effectiveness of any intervention, and implies a redistribution of power within the peacebuilding relationship. It includes attempts to bring together policy-level initiatives and perspectives with the views and expectations of end-users of security among populations in conflict-affected societies.

[10] ibidem

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