

### Regional approaches to conflict prevention in Africa European support to African processes

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#### Introduction

A NUMBER OF AFRICAN LEADERS ARE DEVELOPING AND PROMOTING A DYNAMIC NEW PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA THROUGH THE AFRICAN UNION (AU), THE NEW ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD) AND AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS. THIS HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, WHICH IS IN AN INCREASINGLY RECEPTIVE MOOD. FIRST, IN LIGHT OF THEIR COMMITMENTS TO THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, DONORS ARE EAGER TO SUPPORT PROMISING AFRICAN-LED INITIATIVES TO REDUCE THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF CONFLICT ON THE CONTINENT, BECAUSE THEY ARE KEEN TO IMPROVE THE IMPACT OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT ON POVERTY REDUCTION. SECOND, THE US-DECLARED 'WAR ON TERROR' HAS SPARKED CONCERN THAT AFRICA'S CONFLICTS COULD CREATE FERTILE BREEDING GROUNDS AND 'SUPPLY ROUTES' FOR TERRORISM. AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION IS THEREFORE FOCUSED ON CONFLICT ON THE CONTINENT AS NEVER BEFORE.

The European Union, for its part, has been building on various policy advances that it has made on conflict issues since 2000. In addition to participating actively in the debate, the EU has demonstrated its willingness to back African initiatives with financial resources. At the AU Summit in Maputo, the EU expressed its commitment to conflict prevention by engaging African leaders in discussions on a medium-term support facility for peace and security – before the ink was even dry on a contract for a first EUR 10 million grant<sup>2</sup> to the AU for conflict prevention. Previously, in mid 2002, the European Commission had pushed for the inclusion of conflict prevention as one of the sectors identified for support from the European Development Fund (EDF) in the four Regional Indicative Programmes (RIPs) of the African ACP<sup>3</sup> regions.

#### A window of opportunity

The EU is, of course, no stranger to the idea of regional approaches to conflict prevention and structural stability. After all, it is itself built on the principle that conflicts in Europe can best be avoided by building regional cooperation, by seeking to reduce disparities between countries and communities and by encouraging exchange. The EU is also Africa's most significant partner, both politically, in terms of shared history and presence and engagement on the ground, and economically, through trade, development and humanitarian assistance. The European Commission is, therefore, a natural partner to support African regional approaches to conflict prevention.

The coincidence of these various African and EU initiatives and debates has created an unprecedented *window of opportunity* which must now be translated into conflict prevention programmes on the ground. In practice,

this means putting policy into action at the regional level to support work contained in the RIPs. African and EU officials all over the continent will, over the next year, be working together to make this a reality, with the participation of a variety of non-state actors that are able and willing to contribute.

This *In Brief* helps set the scene for the actors involved in making the emerging *regional approaches to conflict prevention* a reality on the ground. It starts with a brief explanation of the regional approach to conflict prevention. Afterwards, it describes the new context in Africa and internationally in which conflict prevention is now situated. The paper then turns to EU policy on conflict prevention and the instruments at the Union's disposal, exploring how these instruments can be used to support African initiatives to counter conflict. A final section offers 'next steps', which translate these concepts into practical ideas of direct use in policymaking and programming.

#### INTERNATIONAL ALERT

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## Why a regional approach?

Conflict in Africa has had a massive impact on the fight against poverty, ultimately stunting the continent's prospects for long-term structural stability and sustainable development. Conflict has caused the deaths of millions of people, injuries and abuses to countless others and destroyed innumerable livelihoods. The attendant destruction of material resources has set back by many years the vital economic and social development programmes that are so needed to tackle poverty and promote stability on the continent.

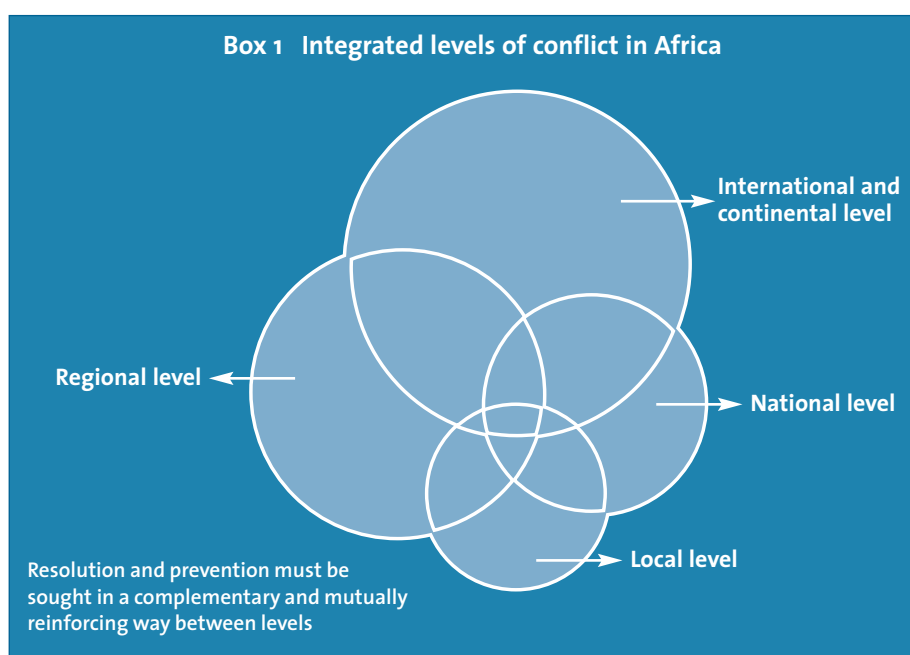
Conflict has always had regional ramifications in Africa. What has changed, especially since the 1980s, is the scope and nature of global and regional interconnections. Better understanding of the regional dynamics of conflict has also emerged and is increasingly reflected in policies of the EU and its member states. Though conflict has tended to be intra-state in origin, due to strong cross-border dimensions it has often spread to destabilise whole regions. Armed groups including child soldiers are coerced and driven across borders to fight. Exploitation and trade of natural resources fuel conflict at a regional level. Small arms and financial resources flow across borders, and refugees are forced to flee their homes to escape violence, starvation and injustice. Over the past ten years, conflicts in, for example, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sudan and Angola have all had strong regional dimensions. Together they have embroiled fourteen African countries in strife.

As the causes and impacts of these conflicts are regional, so must be the solutions. African governments have become increasingly aware of the need to react when conflicts flare up in neighbouring countries. To do this without interfering in the internal affairs of their neighbours, many turn to existing regional organisations to intervene in the collective interest (e.g., IGAD's role in the mediation process between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the role of SADC in the current peace "negotiations" in the DRC and the ECOWAS peacekeeping interventions in Liberia). Not all regions in Africa, however, have a suitable regional organisation. Nor can it always be assumed that, when they do, these have the capacity and legitimacy to positively impact on regional peace and development. The EU, AU and other African institutions must therefore take a broader regional view that incorporates building constituencies for regional conflict prevention with all stakeholders including civil society, local and multinational business and parliamentarians.

## *Situating a regional approach in an integrated framework*

The need for effective conflict prevention measures at the regional level has become acutely evident to Africa's leaders. This, however, should be seen as only one level of an integrated response. While the consequences of conflict are felt at the national and local levels, their prevention and resolution requires an effective, integrated and mutually reinforcing response strongly inked at all levels – including the regional.

example, the EU can address the trade in small arms manufactured outside of the continent and help ensure that the general population, rather than those fuelling conflict, benefit from international trade in African resources (thus countering trade such as in 'conflict diamonds'). Clearly, regional approaches to conflict, if they are to be effective, should be seen as just one level of support within a larger integrated approach. A considerable challenge facing both African and EU policymakers is to ensure that this occurs.



Source: A resource pack for conflict-sensitive approaches to humanitarian assistance, development and peace-building, APFO, CECORE, CHA, FEWER, International Alert, Saferworld, forthcoming.

Governments and other actors have also sought to promote conflict prevention at the country and local levels. For instance, many African Country Strategy Papers for EDF financing propose support for good governance or other measures to reduce tensions and promote structural stability. Looking upwards beyond the regional level, African governments have pushed the AU to establish pan-African conflict prevention programmes which can, among other things, lend support and authority to the efforts of regional bodies.

What we see emerging therefore is the bones of an integrated strategy for conflict prevention ranging from the local and national level up to that of the region and continent. What is more, the EU, through its National Indicative Programmes (NIPs), RIPs and now through its contributions to the AU, is able to provide support to all these levels. Looking even further afield, the EU can support African efforts by addressing external factors that may fuel conflict. For

## *Tackling causes as well as symptoms*

Policymakers have come to recognise that effective conflict prevention cannot be seen only in terms of internal law and order or military measures (including crisis management). Good analyses are also needed to understand a conflict's root causes and dynamics, which may be multiple and complex. Inequitable access to state and natural resources, opportunities and political power and the proliferation of small arms are just a few of the factors that perpetuate conflict in Africa. Often these types of issues underlie actual or perceived inequalities and grievances between identity groups, which can lead to, amongst others, ethnic violence. These factors also relate to structural problems of weak governance and economic mismanagement, such as an unaccountable security sector, debt burdens, unpopular macro-economic policies, the collapse of social services and poor terms of trade.

These interrelations mean that conflict prevention strategies can be a common thread running through many areas of state policy, both responding to existing conflict and anticipating potential sources of conflict with clear, targeted measures at different levels. Conflict prevention strategies and activities must include broader social and economic development measures, and this should be recognised in policy formation, programming, and indeed in the terminology used (cf. Box 2).

A good strategy implies widening participation and ownership in conflict analysis and prevention work, though this does not diminish the responsibility of state institutions and decision-making. In fact, a broad and inclusive approach needs to be supported at the state level, where sound policy remains essential for conflict prevention to be effective. In contrast, violent conflict is exacerbated, and often caused, by weak state structures and poor governance; or it may be prolonged or deepened due to its effect of weakening the state. Strong and accountable state structures are needed to resolve conflicts by non-violent means. However, as the regional dimensions of conflicts have gained prominence, the role of the state, both as a source of conflict and as the primary agent of its prevention and resolution, has become more blurred.

Non-state actors play important roles in contemporary African conflicts, particularly where the state is weak. Non-state actors may have positive or negative involvement – either fuelling conflict or helping to resolve or prevent it. Either way, their role, and the positive contribution they may make, needs to be accounted for in policy.

Local ownership and participation increase the effectiveness of conflict prevention strategies. It is also one of the main tenets of the Cotonou Agreement, which requires involvement of non-state actors in development cooperation. Non-state actors are an essential aspect of a comprehensive policy, but at the same time their insertion into the policy process needs to be carefully managed. Specifically, it is crucial to consider their relations both with the state and with each other. In conflict-affected countries and fragile states there may be antagonisms between different groups which policy must take into account.

Moreover, policy needs to be coordinated at various levels, involving the different actors in ways appropriate to each. For example, the 'structural' causes of conflict will likely need to be tackled through state policy, but for state policies to be effective either pressure or direct participation is needed from civil society. A broad, though representative, set of stakeholders is essential for positive outcomes in conflict prevention.

## The new African context

### *Steps towards an integrated institutional framework*

The policy context in Africa is changing. There is a new impetus from within to tackle the continent's proliferating conflicts. A range of new initiatives prioritise conflict prevention, and there appears to be a new political will to address conflict-related issues. The evolving institutional framework is particularly evident in the conflict prevention mechanisms of the African Union, in the emphasis on conflict-related issues in NEPAD and increasingly in the regional economic communities (RECs). Equally important are the numerous civil society organisations that have developed programmes to tackle conflicts at the grass-roots and other levels. The widening spectrum of African organisations and initiatives now addressing conflict issues – at the supra-national, regional and non-state levels – marks a process of change that needs to be sustained by policymakers and supported by donors.

One key issue is how the different efforts cohere and link so as to strengthen one

another. An overarching framework is provided by the AU, which in its Constitutive Act adopted a proactive stance towards conflict prevention and is building a strong peace and security pillar in its work. As the emerging continental body, the AU has stated its aim to work through and reinforce the peace and security capacities of the RECs and to promote civil society involvement in its conflict prevention initiatives. This marks a shift away from the non-intervention principle of its predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), and indicates growing opportunities to promote conflict prevention at a range of levels.

At an institutional level, the legal mandate of the AU Peace and Security Council offers a broadened scope for concerted efforts at conflict prevention and for collective response strategies to curb governments that propagate conflict. The Peace and Security Directorate, as the implementing arm of the Council, includes both a Conflict Management Centre (CMC) and a Peace Support Operations Division. In addition, the planned establishment of an African Standby Force (ASF) would give the AU a military capacity to support crisis management or post peace agreement operations from 2010.

### Box 2 Language: What do we mean by ...

*Lack of clarity and shared understanding of terms related to conflict prevention is an obstacle to advancing a culture of conflict sensitivity. Below are the definitions of some terms used in this paper.*

**Conflict prevention:** Long-term activities to reduce structural tensions or prevent the outbreak, escalation or recurrence of violence (EPLO 2002). Conflict prevention denotes the full range of activities oriented to this aim including early warning, crisis management, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, conflict management, conflict resolution and conflict transformation.

**Crisis management:** Coordinated and timely application of specific political, diplomatic, economic and/or security measures and activities in response to a situation threatening peace. The aim is to reduce tension, prevent escalation and contribute towards an environment in which peaceful settlement of violent conflict or potential conflict is likely to occur (EPLO 2002). To be effective, crisis management must be planned and implemented with its contribution and transition to longer-term peace and security as a key consideration.

**Regional approach to conflict prevention:** The view that the dynamics of conflict (causes,

impacts and resolution) lie within a regional context. At the same time, this approach strives to link regional conflict dynamics with the local, national, sub-regional, continental and international context. In Africa, the regions are represented by West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa (including the Great Lakes area) and Southern Africa. An example of a sub-region is the Mano River Union in West Africa.

**Civil society:** civil society exists outside the family, the market and the state. It represents citizens of society (individuals or organisations) outside the government, public administration or commercial sector who work to promote general or specific issues or interests on a not-for-profit, non-militarised basis. Civil society can include non-governmental or community-based organisations, women's associations, youth organisations, indigenous people's representatives, trade unions (workers' collectives), religious organisations and the media.

**Non-state actors (NSAs):** citizens of society (individuals or organisations) outside the government or public administration that work to promote general or specific issues or interests. NSAs include civil society as well as actors in the commercial sector, i.e. profit-making business, and can also include non-state militarised groups.



Aside from these formal structures the AU has two special programmes which include conflict prevention aspects. The Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) is a monitoring mechanism intended to make African leaders more accountable and transparent in their actions. The CSSDCA was initiated by African civil society and later adopted by the AU. NEPAD, in contrast, is an initiative of African leaders, first proposed to the G8 and then included in the AU. In a very real sense NEPAD is a deal between Africa and the international donor community in which African leaders themselves take concerted action to tackle the continent's major problems, such as conflict, providing the donor community increases its support to African development. An innovative aspect of NEPAD is its African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which could contribute significantly to reduce some causes of conflict. This is a voluntary process through which African states submit themselves to a governance review by other APRM members. Once these programmes get underway, they could have far-reaching implications for Africa's ability to deal with governance problems and to reduce sources of conflict.

### **International interest and support**

The EU as a whole and a good number of its member states are amongst the foremost donors to manifest interest in and support for the emerging AU. There has also been cautious but sustained interest in NEPAD among the G8. For the EU and some other donors, the peace and security aspects of the AU's work have attracted most attention and the first substantial inputs of resources. This suggests that the international donor community is ready and willing to support Africa's own efforts to establish structures to tackle conflict prevention at the continental level.

EU member states, though much more reluctant than in the past to get involved militarily in the search for solutions to conflicts in Africa, have nevertheless been willing in recent years to provide some limited military support. The first EU force was even deployed in a limited support role in north-east Democratic Republic Congo. All these initiatives have been set squarely in an African framework, combining elements of action by African leaders, regional organisations, the AU and in some cases the UN. As the capacities of the AU increase and the framework it provides grows stronger, targeting external support should become easier and then gradually less necessary as African nations use this framework to tackle conflicts on their own.

Even the United States, wary of direct involvement since the Somalia debacle, has been re-examining the support it can provide, recognising that tensions and conflicts provide breeding grounds for terrorism. But as shown by recent events surrounding the departure of Charles Taylor from Liberia, it too is cautious in its approach, taking a backseat role and allowing African institutions and leaders to lead and tackle the situation in their way.

Although this recent international interest and support for Africa-led initiatives is an important step forward, the focus has been primarily on militaristic, crisis management responses to conflict. This should not overshadow ongoing and potential future work by the EU, its member states and other international institutions in longer term conflict prevention through development interventions, promotion of good governance and human rights standards, and control of illicit small arms and resource exploitation, amongst others.

### **The regional framework**

One component of the changing African institutional context has been the role of the RECs. Although principally established for the purpose of regional economic integration, conflict prevention is fast becoming an issue of great concern for them. Some of

the RECs, notably ECOWAS and IGAD, already have conflict prevention instruments in place. Others acknowledge conflict prevention as a pertinent issue but are yet unable to develop effective strategies that could lead to policy implementation.

The capacities of the RECs differ hugely. Thus, while capacity development in conflict prevention should be a key concern it must also be recognised that this is often difficult to achieve in a straightforward or traditional manner. The functions and set-up of different RECs are important determinants of their potential to be effective in conflict prevention. Moreover, relations between the different RECs are complicated by overlapping memberships and duplication in functions and capacities is therefore a danger to be avoided. This calls for an assessment of which organisations are best positioned to put into place conflict prevention measures and the coordination required between them. The AU is keenly aware of this issue. As its strategy conceives regionalism as the platform for continental cooperation, it has started a process of dialogue with the RECs to improve coordination and harmonisation of their roles and policies. The aim is to establish vertical links between the RECs and the AU and horizontal links between the different RECs.

### **Involving other actors**

Non-state actors may be able to act effectively at the regional level in circumstances that state organisations find difficult. Already there are initiatives that show the potential effectiveness of regional cooperation in non-state settings. The Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace (the AMANI forum) is a good example of a regional structure developing greater awareness of the cross-border dimension of conflicts in East and Central Africa, and adopting a regional peacebuilding approach (Box 3).

## **Engaging with the African peace and security agenda**

### **Using the EU policy framework for regional conflict prevention**

Within the new pan-African political and economic framework and the new EU security agenda, EU external assistance, including trade, development and foreign policy, is increasingly geared towards supporting regional economic and political integration in ACP and other developing countries. The regional approach to conflict prevention too has moved up the agenda and been enshrined in key EU policy documents (Box 4).

#### **Box 3 The Great Lakes Parliamentary Forum on Peace**

*AMANI is a regional inter-parliamentary forum for peace founded by a group of Great Lakes parliamentarians in 1998. It provides a vehicle for dialogue and shared regional analysis, as well as developing solidarity among MPs across the region. Its aim is to strengthen the capacity and role of parliamentarians in peacemaking in the region. To this end, AMANI has established national chapters in its six member countries (Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya) and holds regular inter-parliamentary meetings, as well as undertaking peace initiatives by regional delegations of MPs. These included two recent inter-parliamentary dialogue meetings between Ugandan and Rwandan MPs and fact-finding missions to conflict-affected communities with follow-up lobbying.*

*See reports by AMANI on the fact-finding mission on urban conflicts in Kenya and the conflict map of Kenya at:*

<http://www.international-alert.org/publications.htm#lakes>

#### Box 4 EU policy documents for a regional approach to conflict prevention

- *EU-ACP Cotonou Partnership Agreement (June 2000)*
- *Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention (April 2001)*
- *Common Position on Conflict Prevention in Africa (May 2001)*
- *Development Council Conclusions (May 2002)*
- *Commission Communication on the EU-Africa Dialogue (June 2003)*

These can be found on the European Commission's DG Development website: [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/development/index\\_en.htm](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/development/index_en.htm)

The EU has a variety of instruments at its disposal, both in the Cotonou Agreement and alongside it, to support a regional approach to conflict prevention in Africa (Box 5).

The European Development Fund (EDF) is the main EU-ACP funding mechanism for support to regional conflict prevention. In 2002, the regional programming of the 9th EDF in Africa identified conflict prevention as one of the areas of cooperation. RIPs are the programming documents for ACP-EU cooperation at the regional level in which conflict prevention is systematically integrated as a 'non-focal' cooperation area. As a non-focal area, conflict prevention receives less funding than 'focal' programmes (e.g., large-scale regional infrastructure projects or support to regional economic integration). This does not necessarily imply, however, that it is seen as a lesser *political* priority. In many regions, political crisis may undermine, or render impossible, economic integration processes. The EU has decided to negotiate the RIPs with five 'mandated regional organisations' chosen by the ACP group. In consultation with the mandated organisations, the regional programmes are to be developed jointly by DG Dev (geographical and regional units and the delegations), AidCo and DG Relex, with implementation responsibility lying with AidCo.

The five regional institutions, with the assistance of the European Commission, are now in the process of developing conflict prevention strategies for their individual regions through the RIP. Table 1 outlines progress on the conflict prevention aspects.

### Challenges and opportunities for EU engagement

EU institutional commitments and mechanisms are thus in place for the implementation of regional frameworks in Africa by end 2004. These are significant steps forward in the EU's approach to conflict prevention in Africa. Gaps still remain however. At this crucial time in the planning of the RIPs in Africa and with the mid-term reviews of the regional programmes scheduled for 2004, an analysis is needed of current challenges to EU engagement and potential opportunities for implementing a regional approach to conflict prevention in practice.

For a holistic approach, it is important to analyse EU regional engagement in conflict prevention in relation to the different actors in the field (i.e., via the AU, regional organisations, parliamentarians, local government and civil society). These levels of engagement must not, however, be viewed as independent of one another. In fact, many of the real challenges (and solutions) to Africa's peace and security dilemmas are contained in the linkages between them.

#### Supporting the African Union

The AU is the continent-wide body through which regional peace and security programmes can be coordinated. The AU Indicative Work Programme on Peace and Security (2002-03) aims to reinforce AU interaction with African regional organisations when implementing conflict prevention and peace support operations. In April this year, the EU granted EUR 10 million to support the AU's agenda for peace and security, particularly work on the ground, such as providing a more constant AU presence in conflict areas. This financial support is welcome, but other instruments can also be mobilised to support the role of the AU.

#### Reinvigorated EU-Africa dialogue.

Uncertainty has persisted concerning the resumption of the EU-Africa dialogue at summit level since the postponement of the second EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in April this year. A rapid and effective mechanism for dialogue needs to be established, to mirror the dynamics of regional conflict. The troika meeting between the AU and EU at Maputo was a positive step forward. To stimulate dialogue, however, a variety of flexible meeting processes should be implemented to respond to different issues, on different time scales and with different actors (e.g., the EU, AU, UN and African civil society, parliamentarians and regional organisations).

The *Commission Communication on the EU-Africa Dialogue* (June 2003) aims to 'pave the way for a resumption of high level poli-

tical dialogue meetings' and calls for 'new modalities of EU-Africa dialogue and cooperation'. The proposals it outlines provide useful ways for the EU Africa Working Group to take this forward. One idea is to appoint an EU special representative for the AU. Working from Addis Ababa, the representative would serve as mediator and as a mechanism to promote coherence in EU-AU dialogue and across the different international, regional, national and local levels of engagement.

**Complementarity between regional and continent-wide processes.** In the absence of an effective regional organisation with competence across a conflict area and capable of contributing to conflict prevention, such as in the Great Lakes region, the AU and UN are the appropriate institutions to take on this role. Similarly, to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of efforts between regional organisations, the

#### Box 5 EU instruments supporting a regional approach to conflict prevention

- **9th European Development Fund:** *The bulk of EU aid to Africa is programmed through the EDF, in which RIPs complement NIPs, both of which are based on Regional and Country Strategy Papers.*
- **Political instruments:** *The instruments of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), include political dialogue, declarations, troika missions, demarches, joint actions, special envoys and common positions.*
- **Rapid Reaction Mechanism:** *Designed to enhance the EU's capacity to intervene fast and effectively in civilian crisis management, the RRM covers various areas such as police, rule of law, civilian administration and civil protection.*
- **Trade cooperation:** *Cooperation in trade is approached as an aspect of regional economic integration.*
- **Initiatives in the Justice and Home Affairs pillar:** *Examples are the fight against terrorism and migration and asylum policy.*
- **Development-oriented budget lines:** *These complement formal EU-ACP cooperation in Africa and provide a vehicle for targeted support to peace and development. They include the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), food security and NGO co-financing.*

AU can serve to link the regional bodies under a unified continent-wide peace and security agenda. This is made difficult, however, by the numbers of RECs, the variations in their mandates, their limited absorption capacities and differing political and financial commitments from member states. The EU is a natural partner to support the AU in its efforts to bring coherence to this framework and to promote a unified peace and security agenda across Africa.

Starting from the agreed basis provided by the Ougadougou EU-Africa Declaration on Terrorism, EDF allocations (for traditional development projects, peacebuilding and peacekeeping), and through trade and aid agreements under Cotonou, the EU could assist in the harmonisation of policies and skills across the AU and other African institutions. The EU could, for example, establish a donor coordination mechanism under the AU in Addis Ababa to improve the coordination of expenditure across regional organisations on peace support operations and other cross-cutting issues (such as small arms, war economies and terrorism).

Following approval of such a mechanism, the EU could enter into dialogue on linking peacekeeping activities under the G8 Africa Action Plan – including all the appropriate stakeholders (EU, UN, NATO, OSCE, AU and African RECs).

### Supporting regional institutional capacity

**Absorption and retention of skills.** The lack of capacity of African RECs has been a major stumbling block for strengthening their role in African peace and security. The EU has provided general support to administrative structures, such as to the SADC Secretariat, as well as to existing regional structures with a clear conflict prevention mandate, such as the ECOWAS conflict prevention mechanism. While this support is welcome, the EU has in the past tended to focus its capacity building on technological solutions (such as high-tech telephone or database systems) rather than ensuring transfer and absorption of skills and experience within African institutions. Since the inception of ECOWATCH, for example, little has been established on the ground to enable the mechanism to be operationalised.

As an alternative, the EU could allocate EDF funds for staff training in, for example, conflict prevention theory and practice, particularly the mainstreaming of a conflict-sensitive approach to strategising, planning, implementing and evaluating. Skills in gender analysis, security sector reform, civil administration and judicial reform are also key. The recruitment, reward and retention of skilled staff is, however, the greatest challenge that needs addressing, and until the RECs can offer competitive salaries and benefits, skilled staff will continue to be lost to international and national institutions. This challenge therefore comes down to financial resources and the donor community's commitment to provide this support.

### The balance between crisis management capacity and long-term conflict prevention.

Crisis management plays an essential role in conflict prevention. ECOWAS and SADC are the only African RECs with peacekeeping capacities, and these are largely thanks to the political and financial commitments of the lead countries, Nigeria and South Africa. A Peace Support Operation Facility (PSOF) to be financed by funds 'shaved off' allocated national EDF

**Table 1 Regional programming of the 9th EDF**

| Regions                                                                   | Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | West Africa                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Central Africa                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Southern Africa                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Countries                                                                 | Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.                                                                     | Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.                                                                                       | Cameroon, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Central African Republic, Chad and Sao Tome & Principe.                                                                                                                                                            | Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. |
| Lead implementing regional organisation(s)                                | COMESA under the Inter-Regional Coordinating Committee (IRCC) with IGAD taking the lead in implementing the feasibility study for conflict prevention.                                                                                                                                        | ECOWAS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | ECCAS-CEEAC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | SADC                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Allocation of funds for non-focal sectors (involving conflict prevention) | 10-15% of total EUR 223 million                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | EUR 35 million of total EUR 235 million                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 5-10% of total EUR 55 million                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | The Southern Africa RIP does not foresee explicit conflict prevention activities, though these could be implemented under the non-focal sector envelope.             |
| Progress                                                                  | Consultant being recruited for a study to help COMESA/IGAD define a conflict prevention strategy for the region. The study is to be followed up by a regional stakeholders' workshop, which will examine main findings and propose EC support actions. RIP to be operationalised by end 2004. | In principle, the preparation of this regional programme will be preceded by an evaluation of the 8th EDF project. However, the possibility of carrying out the evaluation and the 9th EDF study in parallel, before the end of 2003, could be considered. | Consultant recruited for a study to help CEEAC define a conflict prevention strategy for the region and to identify possible actions for EU support. The study will, in principle, be finalised by end 2003. The RIP should be operational by the first semester of 2004. |                                                                                                                                                                      |

funds was approved by the AU Assembly in Maputo and is now being considered by the joint ACP-EU Council.

Such an approach to raising funds for an African peacekeeping force is adequate for the time being. There is a risk, however, that funds will be removed from other essential development needs. Until conflict prevention is linked with long-term development, the EU and Africa will forever be managing and not preventing crises. The delicate balance between security and development needs is challenging to find, however, and will vary case by case. Careful assessment is needed during the planning of NIPs and RIPs to measure the impacts of any diversion of EDF funds from 'traditional' development needs. Strategies can then be put in place to mitigate these impacts.

### Strengthening the regional programming approach to conflict prevention

**A multi-sector, regional approach to conflict prevention.** An integrated approach to conflict prevention means linking regional peace and security agendas with regional crisis management, trade and development cooperation. This could entail, for example, undertaking conflict impact assessments of the regional economic partnership agreements. A multi-faceted approach to conflict prevention also addresses other cross-cutting issues on a regional basis, such as small arms proliferation; security sector reform; processes of disarmament, demobilisation and reconstruction; judicial reform; and war economies. Responsibility for these aspects currently fall to different, cross-pillar institutional bodies within the EU. The appointment of an EU special adviser on Africa (similar to that of the UN) to assist in coordinating issues related to the Common Foreign and Security Policy, DG Trade, ECHO and DG Dev across the pillars would be a useful mechanism for addressing this challenge.

**Regional cross-border cooperation.** Cross-border dynamics have a significant impact on Africa's economic growth, security and political cooperation, and are therefore a key consideration in conflict prevention. Regional cross-border cooperation on military inspections, customs, trade, infrastructure, tourism, energy and illicit traffic in small arms, drugs, people and natural resources should be integrated into any national or regional strategy. The EU could further draw upon and share its own experience in building local capacity for cross-border security cooperation.

**The regional structures of RIPs.** The EU's geographical delineation of regions for planning and programming pose several challenges for a regional approach to

conflict prevention. Some countries, for example, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mauritius, are members of two programmes, and some RIPs cover multiple RECs (e.g., the Eastern and Southern African and Indian Ocean RIP contains four separate RECs: SADC, COMESA, EAC and CEEAC). Conversely, the Great Lakes region – despite its record of regional conflict – does not have its own RIP (partly due to its lack of an effective REC). Funding for regional conflict prevention measures in the Great Lakes, therefore, comes from different 'regional envelopes', which makes it difficult to design a coherent strategy for the region.

The EU therefore needs to carefully watch African efforts (within the AU and RECs) to

rationalise regional structures and be ready to adjust its own regional programmes in response when required. It will then be better able to support African states in creating strong, coherent regional institutions that can deliver on their political and economic mandates. Linkages are also needed between the regional programmes to ensure that they capture conflict dynamics that cross the RIP zones.

**Coherence between national and regional strategies.** Unless regional strategies are informed by national strategies, and vice versa, the RIPs will be unable to achieve maximum impact. Several opportunities exist for connecting the national and regional levels:

- *Fostering political coherence among EU member states, the European Commission, African institutions and the international community.* Various European states' contrasting foreign policy interests and historical ties in the African regions influence foreign policy engagement, development cooperation priorities and choice of aid modalities. This poses a major challenge to the design of coherent regional strategies. The lack of political cohesion in the Great Lakes region has, for example, acted as a brake on regional solutions to conflict. The Great Lakes Regional Conference, planned for 2004 and approved at the Maputo Summit and the July General Affairs and External Relations Council, is an important opportunity to address some of these challenges, assuming that the process is fully participatory.<sup>4</sup>
- *Undertaking coherent, shared, in-field analyses.* Many donors and African institutions feel that they lack proper understanding of the complexities of regional conflicts in Africa. Establishing this understanding through conflict analysis is the first and foremost step to developing the responses most likely to have a positive impact. Limited donor presence on the ground exacerbates the problem of the lack of in-field analyses. The AU and RECs could be stronger partners in fulfilling this role. The EU and its member states could support African institutions in this capacity and facilitate communication between the different institutions. The EUR 10 million to the AU Conflict Management Centre could, for example, be used to support the AU's local presence in places such as Burundi and Madagascar. Also useful would be a review of how the early warning mechanisms in the EU (e.g., the Watch list from the Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit) and in Africa (e.g. ECOWATCH in West Africa) feed into national, regional and continental policy and practice.

#### Box 6 Case study in curbing the proliferation of small arms, regionally

*African governments have a joint security interest in curbing the proliferation of small arms. The SADC region is one of the most gravely affected by the proliferation and illicit trade in small arms. The availability and spread of such weapons is a main factor fuelling conflict, crime, human rights abuses and under-development in the region.*

*Through SADC, the EU has supported a regional cooperative initiative to reduce cross-border trafficking in light arms and drugs. In 1999, the SADC Council adopted the programme Prevention and Combating of Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Related Crimes. In the programme, SADC member states committed themselves to effectively fight armed trans-border crime, to reduce and control the flow of illicit arms and establish a regional policy for the control of small arms and light weapons. The regional implementing agency is the Southern African Regional Police Cooperation (SARPCO).*

*This programme led in 2001 to the SADC states signing the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials. The signatory nations thus committed themselves to establish inter-agency groups involving police, military, customs, immigration (home affairs), foreign affairs and other relevant offices to improve policy coordination, information sharing and analyses at the national level on firearms, ammunition and related materials. The EU backed this initiative with financial, technical and political support. A joint EU-SADC working group on small arms established in 1999 meets biannually to promote regional initiatives and discuss how cooperation on small arms initiatives can be enhanced.*



- *Supporting the role of the heads of mission.* The role of the heads of mission needs to be reviewed as it is they who ensure linkages for the EU between the national and regional strategies. Establishing more regular dialogue between the heads of mission and key EU and AU representatives, as proposed in the *Commission Communication on the EU-Africa Dialogue* (June 2003), would be a useful step forward in this regard. Mechanisms should also be built into the mid-term reviews in 2004 to evaluate the synergies between national and regional programmes for conflict prevention.

### Using civil society and local state networks to promote peace and development

Representative and legitimate civil society – including the informal economy, religious and ethnic networks, specialist NGOs, grass-roots peace initiatives and the media – can play an important monitoring and consultative role for formal state and regional systems. Civil society actors can, for the first time, be associated with political dialogue processes under the Cotonou Agreement. The European Commission has also organised regional stakeholder consultations with governmental and civil society actors in order to inform and discuss the national and regional programming priorities. The identification of relevant regional actors, appropriate methodologies for regional consultations and the practical modalities for civil society involvement, however, still present some challenges which need to be resolved.

The EU could potentially provide important support for the building of regional networks and capacities of like-minded non-state actor groups in support of formal regional organisations. These could include regional civil society organisations (e.g., the West African Network on Small Arms, WAANSA), parliamentarians (e.g., the AMANI network of parliamentarians in the 'greater' Great Lakes region), local business, trade unions and associations of local governments.

The opening of EDF funds, including those of the RIPs, for allocation to civil society was an important step forward.<sup>5</sup> As a next step, the European Commission might consider establishing a fund for non-state actors for activities specifically related to conflict prevention in sub-Saharan Africa. Such an initiative could have great potential, providing guidelines and procedures are accessible and easy to use. Examples of civil society engagement with African regional institutions can provide useful lessons in this regard (Box 7).

### Next steps: putting ideas into practice

How best then to provide EU support to the African peace and security agenda, particularly the regional component of that agenda? The next steps in the RIP programming exercise provide an ideal opportunity to work on this and apply some of the ideas explored above. To assist in this process, this final section describes how a joined-together, holistic regional approach to conflict prevention might be achieved.

### Key principles for a regional approach to conflict prevention

This paper has argued that officials should keep some key aspects in mind when approaching conflict prevention and seek to integrate them into their regional planning:

- *the new political context* in Africa's relations with the international community and the growing common interest in tackling conflict, which has created a unique window of opportunity for establishing sound conflict prevention programmes;
- *the new African institutional framework* for conflict prevention work, which is developing fast in an integrated fashion at both the continental and the regional levels, a

framework which is inspiring a growing confidence in the international community;

- *the EU's policy framework* for supporting conflict prevention work, which has now developed into a sophisticated and well-established set of instruments.

In addition, *current thinking on conflict prevention strategies* stresses the importance of an *integrated approach* to the various primary elements:

- *causes and symptoms* of conflict, as both should be carefully identified and addressed;
- *interlinkages*, connecting actions at the continental, regional, national and local levels;
- *actors*, promoting participation and ownership through the inclusion of both state and non-state actors;
- *sectors*, integrating approaches to cross-sector issues with strong regional conflict implications, such as illicit trade in small arms and natural resources, terrorism and organised crime;
- *use of all available instruments*, as a comprehensive strategy should include diplomatic measures, development cooperation, economic, trade and social policy,

#### Box 7 Civil society engagement with ECOWAS on regional peace and security Lulsegg Abebe, Interim Report on the Consultation, International Alert, June 2003

*In June 2003, a consultation on Strengthening the Human Security Capacities of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and West African Civil Society took place in Abuja, Nigeria, organised by the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, the Centre for Democracy and Development, and International Alert. Participants at the consultation included senior representatives of ECOWAS institutions, civil society representatives, policy and academic experts, and representatives of bilateral and multilateral funding agencies. They noted the interconnectedness of conflicts in West Africa, underscoring the need for collective regional response. The consultation agreed on a number of mechanisms for strengthening civil society engagement with ECOWAS on issues of human security.*

*These include:*

- *review of the processes for civil society accreditation by ECOWAS;*
- *creation of a civil society unit within the Executive Secretariat of ECOWAS;*
- *establishment of an independent civil society secretariat to facilitate liaison*

*between West Africa's civil society organisations and ECOWAS institutions;*

- *establishment of a People's Assembly of West Africa's peoples and organisations;*
- *creation of a joint ECOWAS-civil society task force to help develop a strategic plan for safeguarding security in West Africa and an operational and resource mobilisation plan for implementing such a strategy;*
- *popularisation of ECOWAS in the consciousness of West Africa's peoples, particularly the youth;*
- *active promotion of community citizenship by ECOWAS, member states and civil society organisations.*

*A steering committee consisting of 2 ECOWAS and 9 civil society representatives was set up to design a strategy to institutionalise the relationship between ECOWAS and civil society before the end of the year.*

*(For more information please see the Interim Report at [http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/ECOWAS\\_interim\\_report.pdf](http://www.international-alert.org/pdf/ECOWAS_interim_report.pdf))*



humanitarian assistance and ultimately military instruments.

### **Regional and national indicative programmes**

In practical terms, the next concrete step in most cases is to take the orientations of the RIPs and translate them into full regional conflict prevention programmes and strategies. The backbone of these programmes will be to support capacity development of African regional organisations, to enable them to act as the front line in preventing, managing and resolving conflicts under the AU peace and security agenda. Although the scale of the RIPs are not sufficient to finance military operations for peacekeeping as such, complementary activities (e.g., conflict prevention capacity building and training within regional organisations) could be envisaged. In line with the aspects outlined above, however, wider issues (that reflect the multiple levels, actors and sectors involved and instruments available) should also be examined and where possible included in the support strategy.

### **Wider issues to be addressed and included in a support strategy**

**Conflict arising from tensions over natural resources.** Establishment of regional and sub-regional conflict resolution mechanisms in relation to the use of natural resources, such as water, livestock, minerals and timber, may be important in regions where such resources are recognised as a potential source of conflict. This would take place within the context of ongoing national and international initiatives, such as the Kimberley Process, the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the UN Panel of Experts Report on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

### **Cooperation in the fight against terrorism.**

Openings for regional and sub-regional cooperation related to the fight against terrorism from a conflict prevention and peacebuilding perspective may present themselves and could well be worthy of support. This could include, for example, supporting African regional organisations and their member states in strengthening border controls, intelligence sharing and monitoring financial transfers.

**Non-state actor participation.** Both the AU and NEPAD emphasise the valuable role that non-state actors can play in conflict prevention, management and resolution in the different regions. The Cotonou Agreement also encourages such involvement. Non-state actors face particular difficulties in relating to and working with

official structures, and special efforts should be made to understand their needs and address them in a user-friendly and flexible manner. The EU, with the support of the delegations, could support this process by mapping non-state actors at a regional level to assess their size, activities and representation in order to better plug them into the planning and implementation of NIPs and RIPs.

**Links between trade and conflict.** Regional trade cooperation is an integral aspect of any RIP. The linkages between regional trade integration measures and conflict prevention and resolution should, however, be better analysed. Whilst it can be safely argued that economic integration can encourage greater cooperation between countries and act as a stabilising factor within and between countries, trade liberalisation can also have negative impacts on economic stability. The removal of tariffs through integration into a new regional bloc can, for instance, drastically reduce revenue for a country with a heavy reliance on tariffs. Undertaking conflict impact assessments for the regional economic partnership agreements or establishing mechanisms for compensating the losses incurred as a result of regional integration are but two examples of measures that would reduce the possible negative impact of economic liberalisation on preventing or resolving violent conflict.

### **Ensuring that RIPs deliver on their conflict prevention objectives**

**Actions in three areas could help the RECs and the Commission to ensure that the RIP process delivers on its conflict prevention objectives.** First, the *EDF mid-term reviews* in 2004 should be used as an opportunity to analyse both the NIPs and RIPs for their conflict sensitivity and regional coherence. Regional workshops could be organised in 2004 following the model of the East Africa programme, both to facilitate this assessment and to promote implementation of conflict prevention strategies by the EU, regional organisations, other donors and (I)NGOs.

Second, efforts are needed to *build capacity* on conflict prevention and to disseminate conflict-sensitive approaches (including training) specifically tailored for staff in the REC secretariats, the EC delegations (including heads of mission) and the Brussels-based Commission. This could be done either by the Commission itself or jointly with other relevant organisations (the UN, AU and NGOs).

Third, *lists of conflict indicators* can be compiled. Building on the Commission's checklist for root causes of conflict, indica-

tors for monitoring regional perspectives on peace and security could be defined for particular contexts. Similarly, periodic reviews could be prepared to monitor conflict dynamics in the different regions.

### **Linking RIPs with other available instruments and institutions**

#### **Other financial instruments**

In addition to the NIPs and RIPs, specific budget lines as well as humanitarian aid can be instrumental in supporting regional conflict prevention strategies. The regional implications and impacts of activities carried out under these instruments should, however, be carefully evaluated.

Equally, increasing attention should be devoted to the use of EU Justice and Home Affairs instruments, as they can play a valuable role in dealing with cross-border issues like trafficking in people, drugs and small arms and money laundering.

#### **Political dialogue**

The different frameworks for dialogue between the European Commission and its African counterparts should address the regional dimension of conflict, both in terms of conflict analysis and conflict resolution. While this has always been the case in dialogues with regional entities (ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC, CEEAC), there is a need to better incorporate the regional dimension in other multilateral fora, such as the EU-Africa Dialogue or the G8, as well as in bilateral dialogues with individual countries. This should help those involved to assess current and possible linkages between Africa's regional groupings and continental and global institutions that have mandates in conflict prevention and management (e.g., the AU and UN). This is a structural element of paramount importance.

For continent-wide peace and security efforts to succeed, there is a need to extend regional efforts and coordinate them with continent-wide initiatives in order to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication. This is complicated by the sheer numbers of RECs and the variations in their mandates, capacities and political commitment from member states. The EU could play an important role in assisting in the development of mechanisms for harmonisation of policy, skills and processes across the AU and other African institutions.

Finally, EC officials both in the field and at headquarters should be more closely involved in the work of the Council's special representatives with a regional mandate

(e.g., in the Great Lakes, Mano River). Headquarters or delegation staff should systematically accompany special representatives on their missions.

### Ensuring complementarity with other donors

Current and future EC interventions in conflict prevention should be closely coordinated with other donors, particularly EU member states, so as to develop all possible synergies. Member states' expertise and resources could prove extremely valuable, for instance, in military operations to assist regional peace support operations, in transferring project management skills (including management of funds for accountability of operations) and in crisis management.

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## Notes

**1** This In Brief is a unique collaborative effort bringing together ECDPM's knowledge of ACP-EU relations (James Mackie and Adam Higazi), International Alert's expertise in conflict prevention (Lindsay Alexander and Andrew Sherriff), and insights from a staff member (Javier Niño-Perez) of the European Commission's Conflict Prevention Unit in DG Relex. An earlier version of parts of this paper was drafted by Terhi Lehtinen at the ECDPM. The views expressed are those of the authors alone and do not represent formal positions of their employers.

**2** This is part of a larger EUR 12 million grant. The balance of EUR 2 million is to be used for the broader institutional development of the AU transition from the OAU.

**3** ACP: The African, Caribbean & Pacific countries that are signatory to the Cotonou Agreement with the EU Member States.

**4** Mozambique is an excellent example of how political coherence across international and regional actors can support the move from a country in conflict to stable peace. The global coalition in support of crisis management response in Liberia is another case in point.

**5** See, for example, the User's Guide 'The Cotonou Agreement: A User's Guide for Non-State Actors' by the ACP Secretariat and the ECDPM on access to EDF funding.

## Useful Weblinks

African Union: [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org)

COMESA: [www.comesa.int](http://www.comesa.int)

European Union: [www.europa.eu.int](http://www.europa.eu.int)

ECOWAS: [www.ecowas.int](http://www.ecowas.int)

ECCAS-CEEAC: [www.ceeac-eccas.org](http://www.ceeac-eccas.org)

SADC: [www.sadc.int](http://www.sadc.int)

Africa Peace Forum: [www.amaniafrika.org](http://www.amaniafrika.org)

Conflict Prevention Associates:  
[www.conflict-prevention-associates.org](http://www.conflict-prevention-associates.org)

ECDPM: [www.ecdpm.org](http://www.ecdpm.org)

Euforic - Europe's Forum on International Cooperation:  
[www.euforic.org](http://www.euforic.org)

European Peacebuilding Liaison Office: [www.eplo.org](http://www.eplo.org)

Inter-Africa Group: [www.interafrica.org](http://www.interafrica.org)

International Alert: [www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org)

International Crisis Group: [www.crisisweb.org](http://www.crisisweb.org)

Institute for Security Studies, South Africa: [www.iss.co.za](http://www.iss.co.za)

ISIS Europe: [www.isis-europe.org](http://www.isis-europe.org)

Saferworld: [www.saferworld.org.uk](http://www.saferworld.org.uk)

## Acronyms

|          |                                                                                 |        |                                                             |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| ACP      | <i>Africa, Caribbean and Pacific</i>                                            | ECOWAS | <i>Economic Community of West African States</i>            |
| AidCo    | <i>EuropeAid Office of Cooperation</i>                                          | EDF    | <i>European Development Fund</i>                            |
| APRM     | <i>African Peer Review Mechanism</i>                                            | EIDHR  | <i>European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights</i>   |
| ASF      | <i>African Standby Force</i>                                                    | EU     | <i>European Union</i>                                       |
| AU       | <i>African Union</i>                                                            | IGAD   | <i>Intergovernmental Authority on Development</i>           |
| CEEAC    | <i>Economic Community of Central African States</i>                             | INGO   | <i>International Non-governmental Organisation</i>          |
| CFSP     | <i>Common, Foreign and Security Policy</i>                                      | NATO   | <i>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</i>                   |
| CMC      | <i>Conflict Management Centre</i>                                               | NEPAD  | <i>New Economic Partnership for African Development</i>     |
| CSP      | <i>Country Strategy Paper</i>                                                   | NGO    | <i>Non-governmental Organisation</i>                        |
| COMESA   | <i>Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa</i>                             | NIP    | <i>National Indicative Programme</i>                        |
| CSSDCA   | <i>Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa</i> | OAU    | <i>Organisation of African Unity</i>                        |
| DG Dev   | <i>Directorate General for Development</i>                                      | OSCE   | <i>Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe</i> |
| DG Relex | <i>Directorate General for External Relations</i>                               | PSOF   | <i>Peace Support Operations Facility</i>                    |
| DG Trade | <i>Directorate General for Trade</i>                                            | REC    | <i>Regional Economic Community</i>                          |
| DRC      | <i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>                                             | RIP    | <i>Regional Indicative Programme</i>                        |
| EAC      | <i>East African Community</i>                                                   | RRM    | <i>Rapid Reaction Mechanism</i>                             |
| EC       | <i>European Community</i>                                                       | RSP    | <i>Regional Strategy Paper</i>                              |
| ECCAS    | <i>Economic Community of Central African States</i>                             | SADC   | <i>Southern Africa Development Community</i>                |
| ECHO     | <i>European Humanitarian Aid Office</i>                                         | UN     | <i>United Nations</i>                                       |



## Further reading

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'In Brief' provides summarised background information on the main policy debates and activities in ACP-EU cooperation. These complementary summaries are drawn from consultative processes in which the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) engages with numerous state and non-state actors in the ACP and EU countries. The Centre is a non-partisan organisation that seeks to facilitate international cooperation between the ACP and the EU. Information may be reproduced as long as the source is quoted.

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