



Report

on the
Expert Workshop

The Action Plan ‘Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building’ Status quo and Perspectives in European Comparison

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Background

The Action Plan ‘Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building’ constitutes the most comprehensive framework for the German Federal Government’s policy in related areas to date. It aims at establishing civilian crisis prevention as a cross-sectional task for the entire Federal Government’s (foreign) policy. Lead-managed by the Foreign Office, all governmental departments contributed to this 70-page document which was passed by the federal cabinet on 12 May 2004. The document specifically dwells on new challenges in international relations (political economy and regional dimensions of intrastate wars, terrorism, state failure, etc.), and establishes an integrative approach not reduced to the ‘classic’ fields of crisis prevention (foreign, security, and development policy) but – based on an ‘expanded’ security concept – also including economic, financial, environmental, cultural and justice policies.

The governmental departments have named Commissioners for Civilian Crisis Prevention to implement the Action Plan. Together they form the Interministerial Steering Group for Civilian Crisis Prevention (Ressortkreis ‘Zivile Konfliktprävention’) chaired by the Foreign Office’s Commissioner. While the responsibility for most of the 161 actions outlined in the plan lies within specific ministries, the Interministerial Steering Group has chosen four action areas to be dealt with in sub-working groups in close cooperation between several ministries (security sector reform, discussion group with one pilot country, drafting of a law on posting German aid workers (‘Entsendegesetz’), examination of the British pool model).

The German Bundestag (federal parliament) has obliged the Federal Government to report after two years on the implementation of the Plan’s 161 actions. As **Dr Michèle Roth**, Executive Director of the Development and Peace Foundation, and **Dr Christoph Weller**, Project Director at the Institute for Development and Peace pointed out in their welcoming address, clearly defined criteria will be necessary to enable a realistic assessment of the Plan’s implementation and political impact from an academic point of view. It therefore was an important aim of the workshop to develop these criteria at an early stage. In the second part of the workshop, the European perspective was included by asking how German activities are interlinked with similar European endeavours. What can we learn from the British experience? This was the guiding question of the workshop’s final part.

Session I

The Action Plan ‘Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building’ – Main focuses and benchmarks

The Action Plan’s 161 actions vary very much as far as their concretization and operationalization are concerned. The first part of the workshop therefore concentrated on the development of measures and benchmarks for success or failure in the Plan’s different action fields, thereby focussing on two main chapters of the Plan (‘multilateral crisis prevention’ and ‘strategic leverage points for crisis prevention’). For each chapter, experts presented three exemplary subject areas that seemed to be especially forward-looking and therefore worth debating.

Subject area 1:

Multilateral Crisis Prevention

In her introduction to the first subject area, *Multilateral Crisis Prevention*, **Professor Sabine von Schorlemer** (Professor of International Law, European Union Law and International Relations, Technical University of Dresden) reminded the audience that the action plan is the most comprehensive strategy for security and peace of the German government so far. Current UN-policy goes in the same direction as the German Action plan, which also aims at shifting from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. However, the current challenges of International Relations, among them political economy (“globalization”), terrorism and state failure make it difficult to measure progress because of the broad range of challenges involved.

Enhancing regional responsibility (example: Sub-Saharan Africa)

Dr Stefan Mair, Member of the Directing Staff of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), questioned whether enhancing peace-building capabilities of regional organisations as outlined in the Action Plan, should really be a top priority of government action and budget allocation. From his perspective as a researcher who works on African conflicts he doubts whether the focus is rightly chosen given the mixed record of African interventions in recent crises. There is not only a lack of capabilities, but also a lack of political will among member organisations of regional bodies and African governments. Building up structures may hide the inactivity of African governments. Dr Mair questioned the investments in early warning and instead called for structures to directly implement peace efforts, e.g. through direct mediation. He was convinced that the military capabilities of these regional organisations have to be strengthened, rather than only focussing on civilian organisations and structures. Dr Mair feared that the measures proposed in the Action Plan might be used as a means of not getting directly involved in peace-building in Africa. But the prevention and management of conflict is not solely an African affair or one of peacekeepers from other developing countries (e.g. Bangladesh), but also needs European involvement.

Non-proliferation, disarmament, arms control and sanctions

The new Director of the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy (IFSH), Hamburg, **Dr Michael Brzoska**, focused his presentation on three aspects: theoretical aspects of benchmarks, proliferation and German arms exports.

It remained unclear to Dr Brzoska what kind of philosophy and theory should form the basis for benchmarking. Input benchmarks, output benchmarks and links between policy and practice are possible indicators, but the Action Plan only outlines moderate aims. In the light of these not very ambitious aims the progress seems good, but mostly in areas where there is no concrete output as a result of the action (e.g. international lobbying or participation of the German government in international processes).

Proliferation is mentioned as an important element in the Action Plan, but it is not further outlined how proliferation is linked to rising problems of “failing states”, except for the topic of small arms. Dr Brzoska warned that Germany was losing its leading role on small arms and light weapons in the international debates and that the topic seemed to have decreased in importance in the Action Plan.

He then presented the latest figures on German arms exports. Germany is exporting weapons to “fragile states” even though to a lesser extent than the European average. Large and powerful countries get more support than small “fragile states”. A discussion of German arms exports should however not stop here but acknowledge the complex relationship between arms and conflict. A good part of the arms sold to Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, is connected to German security sector training programs. A simple view of arms exports as crisis-enhancing, which dominates in parts of the Action Plan, obviously does not fit to the realities of promoting security in crisis situations, which are also part of the Action Plan.

Involving the international financial institutions (IFIs)

Dr Martina Metzger from the Berlin Institute for Financial Market Research was very sceptical about the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in engaging in civilian crisis management as the Action Plan understands the concept.

The IFIs have no knowledge of conflict prevention and therefore cannot play a leading role in the international system. They are economic institutions with a clear primary mandate to prevent only financial crises. However, the Action Plan does not comment on economic crisis prevention and the relationship between economic and civilian crises (and their prevention), and fails to make a connection between causal links of poverty and conflict or war. To prevent financial crises, an international lender of last resort and a coherent debt strategy also for emerging markets was necessary, according to Dr Metzger. With regard to the German Action Plan, she pointed out that the IFIs’ importance is not adequately reflected and that only very general recommendations are laid out. It is therefore very difficult to assess whether there has been any successful impact of the Action Plan or whether there will be any in the future.

Discussion

Two main strands of arguments were expressed in the subsequent discussion. The first strand dealt with the issue of benchmarks. **Dr Stefan Mair** mentioned the difficulties of measuring impact and progress. **Dr Michael Brzoska** went into more detail and explained that the community has very little data on war and post-conflict situations, and that it was difficult to recommend lower level indicators that are linked to the “bigger picture” as we often don’t know how they correlate with the upper level. **Dr Martina Metzger** asked for a clarification of long-term strategies before discussing single measures. **Professor Volker Rittberger** (University of Tübingen) stated that “money talks” and wondered how great the resources were which were allocated to the new orientation in foreign and security policy. Benchmarks for a forward-looking implementation are needed and time-frames should be outlined accordingly, but for him the most important question remains whether there are any changes in the national or international budgets regarding the handling of conflicts. **Dr Brzoska** remarked that due to an intransparent budget process and various budget lines it was very difficult and tedious to come up with concrete figures. He expected an increase in financial terms, but found it very difficult to prove it with actual numbers. Dan Smith (Secretary General of International Alert) added that it was true that “money talks”, but that it was at least as important how money was “translated” into specific action.

Former ambassador **Dr Wilhelm Höynck** reminded the participants of the political aim of the Action Plan, which is improving the comprehensiveness of the government's actions regarding civilian crisis prevention. The Action Plan highlights the importance of government co-ordination and everybody had felt that such a document was needed as a basis for further discussions and for developing measures and discussing them. **Professor Jörg Calließ** (Evangelische Akademie Loccum) agreed that comprehensiveness and coherence between the ministries and between the government and civil society were the main criteria for measuring the Action Plan's success.

These comments led on to the second strand of discussion which dealt with institutional issues and infrastructure. **Uta Zapf MP**, one of the initiators of the Action Plan in the German Bundestag, stated that about 10 million Euros of the defence budget are reserved for civilian operations. She wondered whether the infrastructure formed so far was adequate, since the Interministerial Steering Group did not have its own staff or money. Attaining changes is difficult because the media, the public and some of her colleagues in the parliament do not really care about civilian crisis prevention.

Ms Tania von Uslar-Gleichen (Deputy Head of the United Nations and Crisis Prevention Department at the Federal Foreign Office) said that the Action Plan is a milestone, not a starting point, as the German government has been involved in crisis prevention efforts before. It should become clear whether the group wants to identify benchmarks for the Action Plan or for the capacity of the government to work on conflict issues. Speaking directed to Dr Metzger, she said that the IFIs were of course actors in peace-building, as they work in a specific political context.

Dr Tobias Debiel (Executive Director of the Institute for Development and Peace) acknowledged that the Action Plan is a comprehensive approach and that it was therefore difficult to identify selected priorities, but in his opinion between 30 and 50 of the proposed actions could be operationalised. He reminded the audience that the Plan's actions should not satisfy the needs of a self-referential system of the government and civil society, but should work towards changes on the ground.

Subject area 2:

Strategic Leverage Points For Crisis Prevention

Dr Uwe Kiewelitz, Head of Unit for International Cooperation in the Context of Conflicts and Disasters at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), welcomed the audience to the second panel discussion. In his introductory remarks he commented that the time-frame of the Action Plan has to be seen in a long-term perspective and that budget size was not an objective criterion for the importance of an issue. The example of the World Bank's Post Conflict Needs Assessment shows that good concepts do not necessarily need a lot of resources. The leverage within an organisational or political setting is also important to move a subject forward.

Rule of law, democracy and good governance

These three concepts are important goals of German development policy, as **Professor Thilo Marauhn**, Professor for Public Law, International Law and European Law at the University of Gießen, explained. But how should they be attained? What could be the necessary sub-goals, and how should they be benchmarked? Constitutional support is important in post-conflict and transition countries and has been supported in the recent past with funds from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), but one should be careful not to expect too much from a constitution. It is important to move from the constitutional to the administrative level to make any of the three concepts work.

Germany has a distinct approach towards "rule of law" (Rechtsstaatlichkeit) which differs from the UK or the French approach (Etat de droit). Rule of law contributes to stability; it is not meant to be

very dynamic, but to prevent arbitrary governmental action. Problems are solved at the interfaces of rule of law, where citizens, economic actors and the state interact, e.g. when a citizen applies for a licence to run a business. A big concept like “rule of law” therefore needs to be broken down into its inherent elements, and development interventions should not be afraid to be small and slow.

Prof. Marauhn continued with remarks on “democratization” and “good governance” and wondered whether these terms were sufficiently discussed in the Action Plan. Breaking these concepts down into smaller elements, such as human rights which are explicitly mentioned in the Action Plan, is important. Elections, for example, should never be the first action in stabilizing a state. Local self-governance is key to stability, because citizens create stability, not the central government, but it is not a good first step to create a local government full of corrupt local leaders. So where do we start in post-conflict situations? Do we aim at rule of law first or at democracy? If you cannot do both at the same time, it is more important to establish rule of law institutions and then democratic institutions. If the goal is sustainable institutions, you need learning (democracy) by doing it (from the local level upwards). In any case, sequencing is tremendously important in a post-conflict phase.

Prof. Marauhn concluded his presentation by highlighting four central elements for post-conflict peace-building:

- The Action plan’s focus on the stability of the state is accurate. It is necessary to first develop structures in individual states, and then work with the supra structures in the African Union or other regional institutions.
- Sequencing is important; structures have to be created that last longer than the next election.
- We have to learn to start with small steps: democratic governance needs a solid foundation which can only be developed from sustainable local self-governance.
- Integrated concepts are needed which intertwine small steps and interaction: e.g. the establishment of a water and sanitation project with a small inbuilt element of rule of law and democratic accountability which can then foster local institutions and processes.

Economic and social affairs

Alexander Carius, Executive Director of Adelphi Research in Berlin, acknowledged that the Action Plan has one explicit focus on environmental issues. But to him, the Action Plan still appears as a patchwork of general policy initiatives and single projects. There are links between environment and conflict (prevention), but there is also an absence of dialogue on how to incorporate environmental cooperation into the Action Plan more fully. The fragmentation of the scientific and policy communities and the ministries involved is clearly one disadvantage of the current structure to implement the projects of the Action Plan. He mentioned trans-boundary nature conservation and water management as a tool for confidence building, but criticized the entirely technical approach by the ministries who do not talk about conflict and crisis. Mr Carius wondered about the missing linkages between technical cooperation and its “spill-over” into political processes of conflict management. Political will and instruments need to pick up when a “technical” process ends.

The role of the private sector in conflict prevention and peace-building is mentioned in the Action Plan, but Germany has not been answering how private sector activities are contributing to conflict and/or could contribute to peace. He mentioned the case of a transboundary nature conservation and water management project that served as a tool for confidence building. But the purely technical approach by the ministries avoiding to talk about ‘conflict’ and ‘crisis’ limited the potential success of the project which would have needed a political dimension to address underlying causes of conflict.

Discussion

Dr Höynck pointed at some of the dilemmas that Prof. Marauhn had presented in his statement: As important as sequencing may be, there will always be “victims” between the different stages and sequences for whom patience does not seem to be an option. Also, donors need to present achievements at home, and elections are an important instrument to show achievements, especially after a war. Höynck asked for benchmarks to be formulated taking into account what is achievable, e.g. to talk about participatory processes instead of democracy.

Professor Marauhn did not deny that there will be victims during the process of sequencing, but donors have to “sell” sequencing and engage in a difficult trade-off between their objectives and potential victims. It is illusionary to sell a no-victim approach to the public. According to Prof. Marauhn, this is also an issue of terminology: Selling an integrative approach which includes rule of law, human rights, administrative law and economic opportunities is more important than pushing for economic and social rights from the beginning. Bringing together participatory processes and democracy is challenging from a theoretical perspective, but probably the only way to move forward practically. Another very problematic issue is federalization: It is not a powerful tool for conflict prevention and only works in places with a long history of local independence. Put simply: you cannot transfer Switzerland to Afghanistan.

Dr Brzoska agreed that there are different interpretations and perceptions of rule of law in developing countries, but he wondered what kind of compromises the donors should be willing to accept. The topic of gender equality highlights the challenges: are donors not creating additional conflicts by pushing for standards that have not been accepted in the country or the culture before?

Dr Debiel gave a reminder of the fact that the sub-goals Prof. Marauhn had asked for were to be found in the Action Plan. The question now was how to operationalise them. Furthermore, the Action Plan sets out a clear time-frame of 5 to 10 years, two of which had already passed. Recommendations that are not manageable in this time should therefore be skipped in the debate. **Dr György Tatár** (European Union Council Secretariat) said that conflict prevention is always a long-term issue which clashes with the fact that the politicians’ assessment period never exceeds four years. **Mr Smith** added that the important issue is not just about long- or short-term approaches, but about adaptability and flexibility. A peace process only needs few people to sabotage it, but quite a lot to keep it going. Knowledge about local actors lies at the heart of the issue of adaptability and flexibility.

Professor Jörg Calließ finally put an emphasis on the role of civil society, media and culture that had been neglected so far due to the absence of Ms Heide Simon who had been supposed to present this part of the Action Plan. He noticed that civil society very often has ideas but lacks the financial means to implement them. Unfortunately, the Action Plan does not provide any financial support for civil society and their initiatives.

Session II

Linking-up to the European Level –

The German Action Plan and activities of the European Union

*A panel discussion on the wider European setting and potential roles for the Action Plan and the German conflict prevention framework rounded off the first day of the workshop. As the session's chair, **Dr Martina Fischer**, Deputy Director at the Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management in Berlin, said in her introduction, the European level – although it constitutes an important reference point for Germany's development, foreign and security policy – remained rather underdeveloped in the Action Plan. Against this background, the question was how German activities could be better interlinked with European endeavours.*

Ms Catriona Gourlay from the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in Geneva analysed the Action Plan's provisions for strengthening civilian crisis management on the European level. She welcomed the commitment to ESDP missions, noting the positive signals that EU short-term monitoring missions sent to the international community. This clear interest that the EU has shown for example in Aceh or Jaffna is an important improvement in the EU's foreign relations profile. At the same time, she asked for strategic planning on when to use the instrument of a short-term mission and when to give support in other forms, e.g. through NGOs. As far as the training of civilian personnel is concerned, Germany has in her view chosen a very expensive approach through its Center for International Peace Operations (ZIF): without an assessment of needs, participants are selected for the 2-week training courses, though not every participant will be sent on a mission afterwards. Canada has adopted a different model of on-the-job training and supports internships of young graduate students in missions which they think will increase their readiness for employment rather than a formal training course.

She concluded that from an outside perspective the Action Plan seems well-meaning but not really thought through for the EU context. The different budget lines and legal frameworks that are currently in place in the EU and the incoherence in Germany regarding the use of different instruments add to current difficulties.

Professor Volker Rittberger, Professor of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Tübingen and Chair of the Governing Council of the German Foundation for Peace Research (DSF) explicitly spoke as an academic expert who is interested in how recent conceptual changes at the policy level, e.g. the concept of human security or the "securitization" discourse, have implications for the theoretical foundations of the Action Plan. In light of these developments the restructuring of the Action Plan is an intellectual challenge that intellectuals need to take up. Intellectuals and academics have not commented so far on this shift of priorities away from democratic peace and towards security issues. In Prof. Rittberger's view, peaceful change is the necessary way to achieve democratic peace. He did not agree with Prof. Maruhn's notion of "stability" as an objective of interventions in post-conflict situations, but stressed the idea of peaceful transformation to achieve the rule of law and accountability – two important pillars of democratic peace.

The last panel input of this first day came from **Dr György Tatár**, Head of Task Force, Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit in the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union in Brussels. He stressed that Germany alone cannot be effective in implementing the Action Plan, but needs the support of the international community. An important question is therefore, how German efforts can be linked to European efforts and the efforts of the international community. Dr Tatár mentioned the secret "watch list" of the Council listing twice a year states that sooner or later will fail. The watch list is discussed in regional working groups who then decide whether an early action strategy is conceived and implemented. He named a few problems on the European level, such as

differences between a global and a national view and between different foreign ministries, or difficulties in finding agreements on benchmarks to assess the effectiveness of EU activities. But the key challenge for any future initiative is coherence: coherence between actions and tools of member states, which should then be linked to the coherence of/within the Council and other EU bodies, and finally to global institutions like the UN, OSCE, OECD, IMF or World Bank and coherent strategies of other global players like the US, China or Russia - a challenge that probably will remain with us for quite some time to come.

Discussion

In the plenary discussion, **Ms Gourlay** reminded the audience of two different cultures within the EU: A foreign-policy-driven culture, which relies for example on diplomacy, and a development-driven culture. The question for her was whether it was possible to marry the two cultures for a coherent short-term foreign policy that takes development prospects into consideration as well. **Dr Brzoska** spoke of comprehensive, but unbalanced agendas in Europe and an imbalanced German Action Plan which leaves out military aspects of conflict management. Coherence is not a goal in itself: work on different levels with different instruments is necessary. Too close a focus on coherence can prevent effective measures being applied, if just seen as an end for the sake of having a common aim. **Professor Herbert Wulf**, Pinneberg, noticed a complete incompatibility between the Action Plan which focuses on civilian aspects of crisis prevention and the ESDP, with a balance between civilian and military aspects in theory but a strong military emphasis in practice. What is the aim of the Action Plan, then, he asked. Is it just about pleasing civil society? Or is it wishful thinking?

M. von Uslar-Gleichen compared the mere size of the EU strategy, 12 pages, to the 120 pages of the Action Plan and remarked that not being comprehensive also means not being limited and flexible to move forward with new instruments. She also highlighted the fact that civilian crisis management is not just limited to civilian actors and that there are appropriate references in the Action Plan which also address military support. There have been more civilian ESDP missions than military missions so far, but a remaining challenge is that military personnel is on “stand by” whereas civilian personnel is needed in their home countries as police personnel or judges and leave a vacancy if they participate in EU missions.

Mr Ahmed Badawi criticized the fact that the top-down, synoptic model of identifying problems and then identifying different variables and causal relationships which can be measured with benchmarks is an old model that has been used for the last 50 years, but is problematic for tackling complex current problems. There is no way to identify impacts of the Action Plan because of our limited cognitive capacities. He suggested an incremental approach, e.g. a focus on Security Sector reform which then can be used to develop benchmarks to measure policy.

Dr Christoph Weller asked whether there is a special chance for promoting civilian conflict prevention during the German EU presidency. And if yes, what needs to be done by which actor? He also commented on some of the theoretical remarks and opted for a de-constructivist approach towards analysing the Action Plan. There is not one theory behind the Action Plan, but many theories which contribute to the incoherence. **Ms Gourlay** advised focussing on a country or region rather than trying to tackle “everything” under one presidency.

Dr Fischer rounded off the evening with a brief report from a recent conference in Macedonia, organised by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES). Representatives of the Macedonian foreign ministry asked the representatives of Switzerland, Sweden, and Germany for many details about Action Plans and similar initiatives. This is an important reminder to look beyond current partners and have a closer look at new EU member states.

Session III

Great Britain: A Shining Example?

'Investing in Prevention' and the 'Conflict Prevention Pools'

The second day aimed at introducing British concepts and experiences to broaden and enrich the specific German approach. First, on a conceptual level, the study 'Investing in Prevention' by the U.K. Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (January 2005) was compared to selected parts of the Federal Government's Action Plan. Second, and very concretely, considering as example the security sector reform, it was discussed whether and how the British 'Conflict Prevention Pools' model could be transformed to Germany. The areas 'Conflict Prevention Pools' and 'security sector reform' were chosen as they constitute two of four German 'lighthouse' projects ('Leuchtturmprojekte'), and as they have already been evaluated in Great Britain.

Subject area 1:

'Investing in Prevention' – Differences and Similarities with the German Action Plan

Dr Tobias Debiel, Executive Director of the Institute for Development and Peace at the University of Duisburg, chaired the first session and in his introductory remarks mentioned the "Red team" of external experts that advised the UK government on its strategy paper "Investing in Prevention". The key questions for him were whether there were similarities in the German and British approaches, who was involved in the drafting and in the implementation of the strategies and how far implementation has already proceeded.

Ambassador Ortwin Hennig, Chair of the Interministerial Steering Group for Civilian Crisis Prevention from the Federal Foreign Office in Berlin, provided an overview over the German crisis prevention philosophy and the achievements so far. He explained the institutional innovations of the Interministerial Steering Group and the Advisory Board in which civil society and academia participate. Contributions to the Action Plan were not just limited to the Federal Foreign Office, the Ministry of Defence or the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, but were made by the other ministries as well. This led to an integrated approach towards crisis prevention which addresses all phases of conflict equally. The "Do No Harm" principle has been accepted as well as the responsibility of private firms in conflict areas. Ambassador Hennig identified three key pillars of the Action Plan and its implementation: German government departments are cooperating with each other, root causes of conflict and war are taken into consideration and support is provided to international organizations. He stressed the inward-looking nature of the approach to achieve more coherence on the national level, a nationalization of crisis prevention.

Ambassador Hennig then addressed the differences between the British and the German models. The UK has a stronger regional focus, provides more financial resources to the Prevention Pools and has generally a more practical focus whereas Germany wants to focus more on the root causes and on cooperation with civil society.

The creation of a Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) in Great Britain was facilitated through sugar-coating changes with new money. The PCRU has been set up as a operational rapid response unit of the British government and bundles intellectual capacity as well as operational expertise. This is a clear difference to the mechanisms of horizontal self-coordination between different departments as it is set up by the Action Plan's Interministerial Steering Group. Assessing the benefits of the British pooling model needs to take the constitutional, budgetary and financial regulations into account. Especially budgetary processes and culture are too different to really compare the two models and approaches.

As practical outputs of the Action Plan, Ambassador Hennig named the "lighthouse projects" and the interministerial country working groups as well as the working group on the legal framework for

deploying civilian personnel (“Entsendegesetz”). A new working group on private companies and conflict has been established and the Security Sector Reform Indonesia project was jointly conceived, financed and implemented by various ministries. Depending on budgetary processes, additional 10 million Euros can be spent through the Ministry of Defence from this summer onwards for projects on civilian-military cooperation, the proposals are now being screened.

Mr Dan Smith, Secretary General of International Alert in London, kicked his input off with a quote by a European foreign minister that “no politician has ever been re-elected by preventing a conflict in a country that most of the population has never heard of”. He informed the audience that the lead in drawing up the British conflict prevention strategy entitled “Investing in Prevention” had been taken by the Prime minister’s strategy unit. It was therefore a personalized and politicized process which was not just a task of one department in a ministry. The “Red Team” of which he was part had the job of picking the document to pieces. Representatives of McKinsey, a Labour party think tank, and a General from the army also belonged to the team. During a two-hour long dialogue the government listened to the criticism of the “Red Team”.

The paper attempts to be holistic, integrative and consistent. It contains a uniform philosophy with consistent measures whereas the German Action Plan is rather an inharmonious compilation of diverse recommendations without a consistent line. Mr Smith thought that it was brave to look for its underlying philosophy, because there are so many different theories in the German Action Plan and the underlying causes of conflict and instability are somewhat between the lines: globalization has losers and we have to mitigate these challenges, but the Action Plan is not particularly explicit on these challenges of the world system.

If you compare the two physical documents you can see further differences: “Investing in Prevention” is a mission paper that aims at public communication and persuasion and is therefore designed with a user-friendly flow of text and colourful graphs. The Action Plan rather seems to be a document for specialists, visualized by a very basic design.

What has been reached by the “Investing in Prevention” paper so far? There have been recent changes in analytical approaches, especially in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) regarding conflict and peace and new White Papers are due to be published by FCO in March and by the Department for International Development (DFID) in June this year. Mr Smith also commented on the recently established Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) of the UK government which to him is a disappointment, because it is weak, isolated and has accepted a narrow version of its mandate. It nevertheless was a beginning of change.

The timing and the forebears of the document are also important to mention, Mr Smith continued. The report did not come out of a vacuum and fits into Labour government policy-thinking and -making. The Africa Commission, the Millennium review and the EU presidency all took place in 2005 and the document fed into the same directions. DFID also produced a paper on development and security in order to avoid being sidelined in these discussions.

His final remarks were on the achievements of the report which he described as changes in analytical systems, changes in implementation and discussions like this with European partners. However, the German government set-up is different and not so open to the ways in which the UK approaches these challenges.

Discussion

Dr Tobias Debiel pointed out that different cultures of policy-making and academic approaches have become obvious after the two presentations: The Action Plan tries to lay out a philosophy and

includes more ministries and civil society whereas the UK Prevention plan is concrete policy implementation set up by the Prime Minister's office with hard nosed criticism from a few experts. Furthermore, from the start it was linked up to international initiatives. **Professor von Schorlemer** acknowledged that the Action Plan is an important first step, but asked the audience whether a second version, for example within the framework of the EU presidency, could be a valuable addition. This document would be shorter and maybe more colourful with particular references to international institutions.

Dr Tatár stressed that the meeting is a significant contribution to the current debates on the European level and should be shared with the other member states. Even if different cultures exist, sharing debates and experiences as a way to move forward should not be underestimated.

Those who have some kind of Action Plan should come together and share their experiences, because even the most splendid strategy needs cooperation with other member states. He emphasized that the Action Plan is very close in spirit to the EU debates and documents, e.g. the European Security Strategy (ESS). **Ms von Uslar-Gleichen** added that Spain has invited EU partners to discuss their ideas on a similar approach to the Action Plan in Spring 2006.

Dr Brzoska was impressed by the UK developments and mentioned that from the outside UK does look like a "shining star", especially regarding the cooperation of the government, NGOs, and academia. The question then is how more political clout can be created in Germany, because there are good ideas, but difficulties on the political level. He was therefore very much interested in learning how the differences in the culture of cooperation between the government and NGOs in the UK and Germany can be explained. **Mr Smith** noticed a broad and deep consensus in British society that something had to be done to make the world a better place. The government and NGOs often share the same position. This is the ground on which the government can work, and sometimes even competes with parliamentarians. He wondered why the German government so far has not managed to tap into that, too.

Ambassador Hennig answered that in Germany a conflict prevention lobby was not even looming on the horizon. He made it clear that he himself was not responsible for writing the Action Plan, neither for the good elements nor for its deficiencies. The Action Plan reflects the reality, at least on the theoretical level. The Steering Group cannot set German government policy, but improve structures of exchange. The Steering Group is a good instrument for influencing the peace-building commission once it has become operational. **Dr Höynck** was slightly more sceptical and wondered whether the current political environment is conducive to the Action Plan and its philosophy. The communication aspect is important, but he recalled the difficulties in getting the Action Plan printed, so there is no understanding for a nice layout. The Action Plan describes an unfolding process of change, but it seems difficult to see this in the current environment in Germany.

Dr Uwe Kievelitz remarked that the Action Plan is assigned to the working level rather than to the political level. This is expressed by defining its success in a new "lighthouse project" instead of structural changes.

Subject area 2:

The ‘Conflict Prevention Pools’ Model – British experience and its transferability to German politics (Exemplified by the Security Sector Reform)

The final panel was chaired by **Dr Greg Austin**, Research Director of the Foreign Policy Centre in London. He reminded the audience that neither the UK document on prevention nor the Action Plan can represent the totality of what is done in the field of conflict prevention by the various organizations that fund and implement projects. This was an adequate starting point for welcoming Mr **Graham Thompson**, head of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) Programme in DFID. Mr Thompson started by giving a brief overview over the Conflict Prevention Pools system... There are currently two pools, in which the FCO, DFID and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) are involved: an African pool comprising 60 million GBP and a global pool comprising 70 million GBP. This is not all new money. Pressure from the Treasury was rather to have a more coherent approach towards prevention and peace-building.

The main aim is to provide guidance and resources that do not duplicate the efforts of the regional departments. The people-centred approach that DFID took for SSR determined the ways and means how progress and outcomes are measured at a later stage. Generally, the projects under the pool encourage thinking out of the box. An important realization for the defence advisor was that issues of defence are linked to police and governance, which in turn are linked to the justice system. Mr Thompson explained that the pools should enable the UK to deliver a coherent message to partner countries, but a disadvantage is that the transaction costs are higher. There are different views from different departments as to what constitutes conflict prevention and departments are slipping back to default mode, because it is not new money and they implement projects in the usual way, supply-led rather than demand-driven. The pools had no money for administrative costs, which made it difficult to recruit outside expertise, but new conflict advisors are now recruited outside the pool. If three ministries are responsible it often means in reality that no ministry really feels responsible.

Professor Herbert Wulf, an advisor to UNDP, gave the final presentation. The UK debate on Security Sector Reform has made a strong impact on international debates. The discovery of SSR as a task for development cooperation in his view was largely positive, although there are some dangers evolving around the developmentization of security and the securitization of development. Germany initially missed this development. And it looks different “when theory meets reality”: When he prepared a study for GTZ on SSR, the BMZ, the Foreign Office and the Ministry for Defence claimed that they were already implementing SSR. However, they were talking about isolated projects, not a coherent SSR. Now, a stock-taking is going on in the ministries, but they have not yet come up with a new policy as the Action Plan shows.

Prof. Wulf asked whether the negative consequences of conflicts can be reduced by better coordination of external actors and answered yes, but only on a very small scale. He reminded the audience of the limited influence of external actors on conflict and advised them to be more modest about the aims of interventions. What is decisive is local ownership. In theory, everybody speaks up for local ownership, but it is not exercised in practice. He asked a number of questions to underline his point that “strategies” and “pools” are not enough to really improve SSR and other development interventions: Will the turf battles between organisations continue? Can mission-creep be avoided by pooling? Would hidden agendas of the donors come into the open by pools? For Prof. Wulf, neo-liberal market economy and national interests are still shaping donors’ thinking and programmes.

He finished with a metaphor to describe the forthcoming challenges: Development administration should take the examples of modern sailors who have already switched from “lighthouses” to “GPS”

for their orientation. A “Global Positioning System” would be a good name for a forward-looking initiative.

Discussion

Mr Dan Smith opened the subsequent discussion. He defended the increased internal transaction costs, because a system was created that made it easier to discuss problems and invite opinions from a broader range of stakeholders.

Mr Graham Thompson confirmed that through the conflict prevention pools more coherence has been achieved between London and the field offices. This is currently due to individuals and personalities, but it is starting to create structural links.

Reacting to Prof. Wulf’s comment that Germany only funded national NGOs, **Ms von Uslar-Gleichen** answered that the Foreign Office funds international NGOs and cooperation between German NGOs and local organisations, as well. Project-based funding of projects is possible through the civil conflict resolution project “zivik”, and only institutional funding of non-German organisations is not possible. **Dr Brzoska** deplored the fact that funding was only available for projects on the ground but not for lobby organisations which want to stimulate a debate and thereby could contribute to the profile of the civilian crisis prevention issue.

Dr Fischer agreed that relationship between state and non-state actors has improved. But it is very difficult for local actors abroad to understand the German funding landscape. Maybe this could be improved through pooling models. Local NGOs can often not absorb big sums of money, and they need a German counterpart, which jeopardizes ideas of local ownership, because of the dependency on German organizations. The role of small grants therefore should be included in any discussion about pooling models.

Outlook: Perspectives for Research and Politics

Angelika Spelten, Board Member of the German Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management and Chair of the Foreign Office’s Advisory Board “Civilian Crisis Prevention”, tried to summarize key themes of the two days and to identify forthcoming issues.

The debate about benchmarks and criteria posed the important question whether we are looking at individual projects or at behavioural changes and how to measure them accordingly. Raising the political clout cannot be achieved through a “new” Action Plan, but through papers that are more detailed on objectives, sub-goals and individual measures and accompany the original plan.

The Advisory Board could produce some papers which explicitly outline some of these practical challenges. On the role of civil society she remarked that there is a nexus between political clout and the opportunity to link it up to civil society and academics, e.g. from other European countries, and publish joint papers, e.g. on a joint “Failed States” strategy that could feed into the German presidency and EU processes. Also, the peace-building commission will soon issue a list of countries that they would like to work, with which creates another opportunity to link up to these international processes. Currently, there are missing links between the German civil society and European and international processes. Saferworld for example, has already issued a paper on expectations they have for the peace-building commission.