



# International Conference: Strengthening Global Peace & Security for Development

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## **FACILITATING MULTI-ACTOR COOPERATION TO MEET NEW PEACE AND SECURITY CHALLENGES**

**REPORT FROM THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
STRENGTHENING GLOBAL PEACE AND SECURITY  
FOR DEVELOPMENT**





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GPPAC is a global civil society-led network which seeks to a new international consensus on moving from reaction to prevention of violent conflict. GPPAC works to strengthen civil society networks for peace and security, and to link local, national, regional, and global levels of action.

GPPAC was established in 2003 in response to the call made by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan for an international conference of civil society organisations working in the field of conflict prevention in his 2001 report Prevention of Armed Conflict.

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For the speeches, presentations and additional information on the conference, please visit [www.partners4peace.com](http://www.partners4peace.com)

# INTRODUCTION

***“Taking into account the global interdependence and interconnectedness between countries, the recent historic changes taking place in regions of the world and the impact of the global financial, economic and environmental crises, I believe that this global dialogue on strengthening peace is not only timely and important, but necessary as well”***

**Ambassador Albert Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General OAS**

Regional Intergovernmental Organizations (RIGOs) are increasingly expected to play an important role in ensuring peace and stability in their respective regions. Violent conflicts and other transnational security challenges are major threats to democracy, stability and prosperity. Accordingly, multilateral and multidimensional approaches and strategies to address these issues are of utmost importance.

Since the 1990s a promising array of international, regional, and non-governmental mechanisms to enhance security and prevent armed conflict has been established or expanded. The African Union (AU), for instance, established a set of mechanism for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in what has been called the African Peace and Security Architecture. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has developed a number of innovative internal mechanisms and practices toward preventing conflict in Europe. The Organization of American States (OAS) has placed new efforts on strengthening partnerships with other regional and international institutions and has expanded the scope of its mandate to address new threats such as terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, illicit arms trafficking and others, while at the same time putting a greater emphasis on the human dimension of security.

There is a need and an opportunity for RIGOs to increase the effectiveness of such mechanisms through the establishment of strategic partnerships with different stakeholders, particularly with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). While CSOs, have been developing significant capacities in areas such as early warning, track II diplomacy, policy analysis, advocacy, media outreach, and others, it is not always common knowledge within RIGOs the role that CSOs can play in the development and implementation of peace and security strategies. The same can be said of CSOs, which are not always aware of the mandates, capacities and roles of RIGOs. The creation of greater synergies and institutional channels of cooperation between RIGOs and CSOs would constitute a major contribution to the global peacebuilding architecture.

On 15th and 16th November 2011, high level representatives of regional inter-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector gathered in Madrid, Spain, during the First International Conference Strengthening Global Peace and Security for Development. Participants shared impressions, experiences, and best practices about the development of regional and global mechanisms for cooperation among different actors in the promotion of greater peace, development and security.

This global policy forum--convened jointly by the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), in collaboration with the Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB)--brought together representatives from all corners of the globe, including delegates from the five continents representing many sectors of society including government, civil society, business, and academia.

The importance of a frank exchange and the fostering of collective experiences and institutional memory

were emphasized as essential first steps in the joint development of new paradigms and approaches for establishing peaceful, stable and prosperous societies. The event also provided an opportunity for different stakeholders to see each other's capacities and flaws and consider future developments. The importance of building on this opportunity to develop concrete follow-up strategies for future cooperation was recognized, leading to the development of specific recommendations for different actors, as well as suggested immediate next steps for continuing the dialogue process.

The conference was organized in two sections. The first day consisted of a Policy Forum open to the participation of experts from Spanish based organizations including NGOs, universities, think tanks, representatives of embassies and others. This was followed by a one-day closed round table limited to core participants from regional organizations and civil society organization members of the GPPAC network where participants spoke under Chatham House rules.





# SETTING THE SCENE

Throughout the conference participants identified and reflected on new challenges and threats to peace and security in a fast-growing, complex and increasingly uncertain world. The need for a paradigm shift to enable the development of effective responses was stressed. All agreed a multilateral approach is required creating space for innovation and involving all stakeholders – with the UN, RIGOs, civil society and the private sector all playing significant roles.

## CHALLENGES AND THREATS

Participants identified a number of major challenges to peace, security and development – with national level, regional and global dimensions and frequently inter-linked. They can be broadly categorized as follows.

- ‘Hard security’ threats from arms trafficking, weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, narcotraffic, and organized crime.
- Economic & social challenges related to the world economic crisis, food insecurity, volatile energy prices, high unemployment (especially amongst youth), increasing inequality and inequity, poverty and social exclusion.
- Environmental threats including the impacts of climate change, and the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources.
- Population trends & movements relating to a rapid rise in numbers, as well as population movements and settlement patterns (internally and cross-border) involving IDPs and refugees.
- Intensifying competition for diminishing resources (including land, water, energy sources, etc.) within and between countries
- Political instability related to e.g. unconstitutional changes of government, disputed elections, and manipulation of the population by ‘conflict entrepreneurs’.

While the challenges are diverse and may be particular to different regions, the goal is the same: to promote non-violent solutions to problems faced around the globe.

## FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

In the context of this new world order a new more integrated holistic and sustainable paradigm was proposed taking into account the

inextricable links between peace, security and development – and ultimately aimed at creating more just and equitable societies. The following characteristics and principles were identified as underpinning such an approach:

**Comprehensive:** Relevant actors (the UN, RIGOs, governments, civil society, and the private sector) must work on many different fronts to address not only security threats such as arms trafficking or transnational crime, but also those environmental, economic and other issues that threaten to undermine the peace. A focus on development should be at the core of any framework for achieving long-term and sustainable peace and security.

**Multilateral:** No country, continent or specific region can address this myriad of challenges alone. It is necessary to work together, pooling knowledge, experiences and resources to create the fundamentals of a new paradigm that can deliver peaceful, stable and prosperous societies. A multilateral approach should build on strategic alliances within and across regions toward innovative and creative solutions. In this respect, it was suggested that it may be time to reconsider the purpose, mandates and actions of global and regional multilateral frameworks and promote a more inclusive dialogue on global governance.

Such an approach relies on capable political leaders as agents of change who are willing to seek multilateral cooperation and to propose new concepts and recommendations and are open to citizen participation. It also requires the development of relationships and new structures mechanisms and processes for cooperation between different actors at different levels of governance, within and between regions. Relationships between global entities and regional entities were highlighted as requiring attention to avoid future problems. Improved cooperation between multilateral organizations

*In the face of the daunting challenges the globe faces today, the path forward is effective dialogue and an unwavering commitment to engagement.*

and civil society is also essential, while the potential role of the private sector – as a relatively new but potentially influential actor on the conflict prevention scene – also needs to be developed.

**Democratic:** Stronger democratic inclusion and the broadening participation of all sectors of society, including marginalized groups, is fundamental to a truly multilateral approach. It is therefore necessary to strengthen and deepen democracy beyond the formal establishment of basic democratic institutions and processes and to deliver tangible gains for populations in terms of social and economic goods. The need to improve the quality of democracy applies across the board, including in those established democracies where only a minority vote. Political systems and democratic institutions must be strengthened and more structured and meaningful mechanisms for civil society participation developed, involving trade unions, academia, and the private sector. At the same time, the business community must take on more responsibility as transparent and accountable partners. Participants considered the relationship between democracy and development, including whether development might ever take precedence over democracy. With reference to the failure of multi-party democracy to deliver in contexts of political transition in Africa (and elsewhere), one participant cited examples of relatively rapid economic development under hegemonic regimes as occurred in some ASEAN states as well as on the African continent – in Botswana, for example – as deserving of analysis for any lessons learned. Participants generally felt it important to work on all tracks, including democracy and development, simultaneously. Recognizing that in many contexts democracy is still in its infancy,

some basic democratic elements were identified (including a multi-party system, free fair elections, transparency and accountability, etc.) that combined with a strong civil society organized effectively into representative groups are the key to creating and maintaining peaceful and secure societies. It was also noted that elections alone are not an indication of a functioning democracy.

**Equitable:** Peaceful, democratic and developed societies, it was argued, are associated with educated and skilled populations and the equitable distribution of resources and public goods. A development paradigm is needed that allows for social inclusion, while reducing inequity and creating opportunities that can bring about conditions for social, economic, political and cultural development.

One participant proposed the following criteria for the promotion of equitable development: (1) A strong and independent state featuring separation of powers of the Executive and Judiciary, civilian oversight of the security sector, and political parties based on values not identity (2) A sustainable independent private sector (3) A strong and widely representative civil society. Each area should enjoy equal weight and provide a balance to the others. In this respect it was noted that civil society cannot replace the state which has an important role as mediator between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’, but it can hold the State accountable.

In the context of political transitions, a useful distinction was made between revolution and uprising – with the latter potentially leading to regime change, but bringing new elites to power. Participants argued rather for the dismantling of current systems and creation of a new global structure – a compact between the State,

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### Box 1. Including marginalized groups: youth and women

*Participants highlighted the risks to security in many contexts posed by unemployed youth who may easily be co-opted into violence and crime as an option for making a living in the absence of other viable opportunities. While education and skills training are fundamental to promoting the economic integration of youth, it was also noted that in some situations (e.g. Kenya) the ranks of the unemployed include well-educated college graduates frustrated by their lack of prospects. Job creation is vital, but it was also suggested that a shift in approach is required to encourage entrepreneurial spirit and capacitate youth to create their own livelihood opportunities.*

*The need for increased women’s participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding was also highlighted. The spontaneous action of women’s organizations was noted as a positive phenomenon to be further supported and encouraged.*

private sector and civil society rooted in values and capable of delivering equitable development.

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**Box 2. Democracy and development: challenges of implementing a comprehensive approach**

*Developing a comprehensive approach that incorporates development and democracy is a huge challenge for the League of Arab States (AL) post Arab Spring. Countries with very different dimensions all require democratic change, including action to i.a. ensure respect for human rights, combat corruption, build economies and provide employment, and reduce social inequalities. Work underway to review policies in these countries across many different fields is a long but necessary process. It is also crucial to try and reach a level of reform in countries such as Syria where regime change has not occurred and populations continue to suffer violence and human loss. While the AL has made efforts to reach agreement on implementation of peaceful reforms within member states, development has been very slow in many cases. Lack of progress in the Mediterranean Basin as a geostrategic area yet to achieve peace and the situation of Palestine and the Occupied Territories stand out in this respect.*

*Amb. Hassine Bouzid, Head of the Mission of the League of Arab States in Spain*

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**Box 3. Education as a tool for addressing inequality and promoting peace**

*Many participants stressed the importance of education in particular as an essential tool for addressing inequality through knowledge and skills development for improved livelihoods and employment opportunities. The key role of education in building stable societies was highlighted in a presentation by Mr. Vasu Gounden, Director of ACCORD, South Africa, who noted a link between highly educated populations and high employment on one hand with declining populations, low infant mortality rate, and high GDP per capita on the other. In such cases, if a Government is voted out, members have skills and resources they can transfer into the private sector or CS and their security is guaranteed. Conversely, many African states are characterized by poor infrastructure, low GDP per capita, and high concentration of power and resources at the centre. The majority population meanwhile remains on the periphery marginalized and disadvantaged (albeit with pockets of power and resources within the periphery at different levels). In such situations, where the stakes are high and alternatives limited, any challenge to power, including loss of elections, can trigger armed conflict.*

*Peace and citizenship education was also emphasized by participants as a crucial tool in challenging positions, changing mindsets, and helping to develop common civic identities.*

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# ACTORS' ROLES

The current roles and contributions to peace and security of key actors – the UN, RIGOs, civil society, and the private sector – were considered and approaches, experiences and best practices shared.

## UNITED NATIONS (UN)

**Role:** Significant developments at UN level were identified in terms of the shift from reaction to prevention and recognition of the need to enhance consultations with RIGOs and civil society and to develop guidelines for the prevention of armed conflicts as reflected in the recent report of the UN Secretary General (SG) on Preventive Diplomacy: Delivering Results. While much has been achieved since its inception, some suggested that the UN now requires an expanded mandate to address new and emerging sources of insecurity. It was also noted that global political will to restructure the UN Security Council (SC) is required to ensure effective action.

**Structures and Mechanisms:** In terms of current UN efforts to help prevent violent conflict, the Director of the Policy and Mediation Division of the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) provided an overview of the capacity, competence and mechanisms of the DPA, which includes the Mediation Support Unit (MSU). Established in 2006, the MSU has rapidly developed its capacities. While the DPA has highly trained staff, where specific expertise is lacking, an additional resource is the Mediation Standby Team comprising seven skilled experts who can be deployed within 72 hours in a crisis situation. DPA also has a roster of c. 200 experts. Standby and roster teams work within the parameters of existing mandates – whether derived from the Secretary Council, General Assembly, or a Special Representative of the SG. The MSU is willing to engage in situations regardless of the scale of and international attention accorded to ongoing and emerging conflicts. Indeed, c. 60% of the work of the Unit is on underlying issues such as land that do not often attract media attention.

## REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

**Role:** RIGOs play an increasingly crucial role in preventing violent conflict particularly with respect

to: (1) the peaceful management of political transition; (2) promoting good governance and the development of strong democratic institutions; and (3) responding to transnational security threats.

Participants cited numerous examples of RIGO activity in this regard, including: the increasingly assertive role of the League of Arab League vis-à-vis the 'Arab Spring'; cooperation between the UN, African Union (AU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in framing and supporting peaceful transition in Guinea; the involvement of Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Madagascar; and the promotion of peace, prosperity and regional integration in East and Central Africa by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

IGOs at regional and sub-regional level have the advantage of knowledge, information and expertise with regard to the – often complex – threats to peace and security within their own regions which can inform analysis and action by other international actors. A strong RIGO or sub-regional organization can also provide leadership to the international level. In West Africa, for example, a strong ECOWAS provides leadership for

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### Box 4. Can there ever be too many RIGOs and sub-regional organizations?

*One participant characterized the complex picture of RIGOs in Latin America as a symptom of the 'anxiety syndrome' of governments trying to prepare for future shocks. Others, however, welcomed the complex architecture of inter-State organization at regional and sub-regional level in Latin American and elsewhere, arguing that political consultation among states is generally good. With reference to the smaller geographical alliances, it was noted from a pragmatic perspective that it is easier to reach consensus among 5 than 34.*

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the AU and UN. Likewise recent diplomatic steps by the AL in Syria are helping to prepare possible action at the global level.

Participants considered experiences – past and current – of managing political transitions and preventing violence and of RIGO’s contributions to these processes in different regions as well as the role that CSOs have had to support these efforts. Representatives of RIGOs provided information on the historical genesis, principles, approach, mechanisms and operational practice of their organizations to prevent in-region disputes from developing into armed conflict and highlighted obstacles and challenges in

this respect. The challenges of achieving peaceful democratic change were examined with specific reference to Southeast Asia and the Arab world. The frameworks for promoting governance, peace and security in-region by the African Union, Pacific Islands Forum and OAS and by the European Union as an external actor were also examined. Examples of inter-regional exchange and cross-learning between organizations were noted.

**Sovereignty Principle:** RIGOs have very different development paths in terms of the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention in member states’ affairs which obviously have implications for the

nature and extent of RIGO actions and relationships not only with governments of member states but with other actors, including CSOs.

**Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN):** Throughout a tumultuous period of conflict and transition from the late 60’s through the 70’s, ASEAN upheld the principle of ‘no regime change by outside force’. The principle of non-interference is still considered by ASEAN to be vital to the region which is characterized by diverse political systems. The speaker acknowledged that

**“The nature of the regime and system of government in individual states should be left to the people of the state”**

Ambassador Rodolfo Severino, Former ASEAN Secretary General

that some regimes are resistant to the acceptance of international norms which they perceive as a threat to their power, but stressed that changes must come from within. ASEAN’s role, he said, is to encourage positive trends underway (as it is now doing in Myanmar) rather than imposing sanctions and embargoes. The principle of sovereignty also dictates that ASEAN engages with civil society as a regional group at high profile meetings, while in-country cooperation is left to member states.

**Arab League:** Actions in Libya and more recently in Syria are illustrative of the League’s increasing

willingness to sanction member States for actions within their own territories. The AL is committed to engaging with civil society within States (not just regimes), although it was noted that the level and pace of civil society development is markedly different across its 22 Member States meaning engagement must be considered on a country-by-country basis. March 2012 will see a report on the

**“Improved UN and EU engagement, including appropriate human and other resources, is necessary to reinforce democracy in the region. Consultation and dialogue between different actors at all levels is key.”**

**Ambassador Hassine Bouzid, Arab League representative in Spain**

restructuring of Arab States which will help inform future engagement. Peace and security, it should be emphasized is regarded within the AU as means to end i.e. to create conditions for economic development.

**Organization of American States (OAS):** The principles of sovereignty and non-intervention are still strongly embedded in the RIGOs of Latin America and the Caribbean. The Inter-American Democratic Charter does not provide for immediate independent OAS action in a country without consent when there is a crisis.

**Pacific Island Forum (PIF):** The Forum has seen a shift from adherence to the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention in the 1970’s and 80’s toward intervention in crises situations under the 2000 Biketawa Declaration. The shift is, however, relatively recent and resistance to external ‘interference’ persists. PIF member states are consequently unlikely to welcome UN SC involvement. In the case of the Solomon Islands, for example, UN SC endorsement was sought after the event not before.

### **RIGO Approaches, Structures and Mechanisms for Preventing Violent Conflict & Promoting Stability**

**ASEAN:** Operating a policy of consensus, the organization comprising 10 member states has engaged with all major powers in the region through inclusive, non-confrontational, constructive processes to reach peaceful solutions. Self-styled as a ‘friend to all, enemy to none’ ASEAN +3 engages

with its northern neighbours (China, Japan and the Republic of Korea) while the Regional Forum, allows 27 states parties with a bearing on security in the Asia Pacific region (including powers such as the US and Russia) to engage in dialogue for peace and security in a multilateral forum.

Over time ASEAN member states have committed to transparent and efficient administration and have reached agreements on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and free trade – although implementation of the latter has reportedly proven inadequate due to lack of knowledge amongst negotiators, lack of human resources and equipment, and protectionist lobbies. Progress has been made on preserving the regional environment, including water quality standards, as well as cooperation against transnational crime including international terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking or persons and exploitation of women and children. ASEAN has also been trying to encourage regional identity for stability and economic prosperity through tools like the Ship for Southeast Asian Youth to foster understanding and friendships, for example.

**Arab League:** One of the main objectives of the Arab Peace and Security Council (PSC) created in 2004, is the proposal of different strategies for peace in Arab states. Eight meetings to date have dealt with inter alia aggression in Syria, and piracy off the Somali coast. All resolutions are adopted by consensus. An Arab Group was created in 2009 to implement these decisions. The PSC has collaborated with its counterpart in Africa – the AU Peace and Security Council – and hopes to reach similar collaboration agreements with other organizations.

**African Union:** The AU’s apparatus of early warning (EW) and response is based on conflict analysis leading to recommendations for Member States. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) is the standard decision-making organ for conflict prevention and has created mechanisms to monitor and identify responses to security threats including through structural prevention in the areas of economic development,



DDR/SSR, and transitional justice, etc. These responses are supplemented by fact finding, good offices, and mediation activities. However, the real test, it was suggested, lies not in the development of structure and processes, but in their effective implementation. The continental EW system is hampered by a lack of capacity (due to insufficient human resources). There is also a significant gap between analysis and action which relies on political will. Even where the AU has the will, engagement with a particular state can be hampered in the face of intransigence from the incumbent regime – as was the case with Gaddafi in Libya, for example. The AU, it was reported, is now engaging with Libya and is insisting on the inclusiveness of that the National Transitional Council before it is recognized.

**European Union:** EU concern for external security is rooted in the European Security Strategy (2003) embodying a comprehensive approach that recognizes the link between security and development. A representative of the newly-created European External Action Service (EEAS) provided a comprehensive overview of EU structures, tools, and activities in the realms of conflict prevention and peacebuilding outside of the EU with specific reference to the role of the EEAS in facilitating more coherent, multi-dimensional and effective EU action on a worldwide scale.

Tools in place for EU engagement throughout the conflict and crisis cycle encompass: early warning and conflict assessments (EU Delegation reports, EU watch-lists, SITCEN/Crisis Room); policy dialogue with third countries; Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) initiatives e.g. rule of law in

Kosovo (EULEX); and financial instruments linking relief, rehabilitation. Instruments with direct impact on the security and development nexus are the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Instrument for Stability (IfS). The latter, is the only specifically dedicated EU financial instrument to crisis response and peacebuilding and has more flexible provisions which allow for

action without prior formal consultation with member states. Potential situations for engagement are discussed by all member states in the Political and Security Committee and there has reportedly been a high degree of EU activity in many conflicts.

EU activities in conflict prevention and peacebuilding are to be coordinated under proposed EEAS structures. Co-located within the Commission's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments Service (FPI), the EEAS should ensure the swift delivery notably of IfS and CFSP/CSDP actions and is responsible for the programming of the IfS.

The EU also aims to further the early warning capacity of other regional organizations, including the AU and AL.

**OAS:** The OAS comprises 34 Member States from the Western Hemisphere, 68 Permanent Observers from Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa, as well as other specialized agencies, to give political momentum to the inter-American agenda. The OAS represents an enormous diversity of nations in many ways, from the most powerful and developed country to member states with no more than fifty thousand inhabitants. It is in this diversity that the OAS as a multilateral platform adopts resolutions and mandates through a process of consensus building and through consultation, cooperation and negotiation.

In 2003, OAS member states recognized that a multidimensional approach for addressing security threats was vital to sustaining democratic governance and strengthening the foundation of democracy in our societies. Today, the four pillars of the OAS are the promotion of democracy and democratic governance, respect for human rights, citizen security and socio-economic development. The OAS recognizes that these pillars are interdependent, complementary and mutually reinforcing. This comprehensive security arrangement prioritizes the social and economic needs of the entire population. It also recognizes the important relationship between democratic forces, economic opportunity and progress and a safe environment. This principle is not only embedded in the founding Charter of the OAS, but was strengthened through the landmark Inter-American Democratic Charter, which was unanimously approved by all 34 member states in 2001. The OAS enjoys a partnership with the AU, which includes election observation missions.





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## Box 5. Defining regional identity

*By whom and on the basis of what criteria are regions defined? These questions were raised with reference to the development of what became an Eastern European network within GPPAC. The process of self-identification of regional actors, it was observed, depends partly upon which organizations civil society wishes to engage with. In this case, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM) and EU structures were both regarded by most civil society members as potential partners. At the same time, this inclination had to be reconciled with a strong sense of belonging to the Black Sea region.*

*In the Central American case, the region has been shaped by geography, culture, and history – the countries have been historically grouped together and were part of one Central American federal state for a while. Size is also an important factor: for example, Mexico is too big to be a member of Central American Integration System (SICA), but it does not mean they do not cooperate).*

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### CIVIL SOCIETY

**Role:** Participants all recognized the potential contribution and increasingly active role that civil society plays in promoting peace and security at local, national and international levels. This more active role was characterized by one participant as the transition ‘from watch dog to guide dog’. At the same time, it was noted that in some cases civil needs to become even more pro-active in seizing the opportunities presented.

The potential – and some of the challenges facing civil society in conflict situations where violence is ongoing or imminent was aptly illustrated by a case study of CSO engagement in Kenya around the 2007 election violence. In this case, contention over the results of the presidential elections had exposed many unaddressed issues underlying tensions particularly concerning land, unequal distribution of resources and the transition to democracy. A diverse and heterogeneous civil society was able to fill the void created by an impasse between opposition and the then government. A number of key learning points from this experience were identified:

- **Seize the moment:** Civil society was able to recognize opportunities to influence or intervene and act upon them.
- **Create space for dialogue:** Peace-builders recognized the opportunity to call for calm and put in place mechanisms for dialogue. A strategic decision was made to delay directly addressing truth and justice issues (including a vote recount) until space for dialogue at difference levels

(national and grass roots) had been created. However, before this strategy was agreed valuable time was wasted while different orientations within civil society between pursuit of truth and justice vs. peace and reconciliation were presented to the public.

- **Reach out to all stakeholders:** It is important to create spaces not only for those in key positions but for all stakeholders i.e. the whole population. In Kenya, Kofi Annan’s team took a multilayered approach inviting perspectives from all walks of life. Civil society also reached out to an inclusive web of strategic actors in order to avert further escalation of violence including by: requesting assistance from the AU; appealing to Desmond Tutu as an eminent person with the experience of brokering peace; engaging with the ministries of internal security and education (to ensure politicians did not attempt to mobilize students); and appealing to the media where reporting was escalating violence.

- **Know the facts:** Data collection meanwhile demonstrated the impacts and implications of the violence.

- **Communicate and strategize:** civil society needed a sharply defined mission based on collective analysis and a coordinated approach working across sectors. Cross-country networks of peacebuilding organizations and daily exchanges (including physical meetings where talks were ongoing) allowed for strategizing and implementation based on reporting.

- **Be prepared:** While civil society had prepared well to ensure peaceful elections, a dispute over the results such as that which arose – and which was handled very badly by the electoral

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*The Arab spring has given impetus to civil society which needs to occupy that space quickly in the local, regional and global arenas.*

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commission – had not been anticipated.

On the question of preparedness, one participant proposed to identify a set of typical situations like elections with a high probability of violence to avoid such unpreparedness in future. Relevant resources are available on the UN Peacemaker website and elsewhere.

## PRIVATE SECTOR

**Role:** Participants considered the significant – but to date largely untapped – potential of the private sector American Business Council (CEAL) detailed the potential role of private sector actors in preventing and resolving conflicts across economic, social and political spheres and set out principles for corporate engagement. Potential roles include:

- **Socio-economic:** Job creation and promoting education, especially at primary level.
- **Peace-making:** Participating in dialogue initiatives for reconciliation and in multi-stakeholder political peace processes.
- **Political:** Political lobbying and participation, including promoting and supporting the creation of democratic institutions.
- **Respecting and promoting principles and norms** including transparency in public and private organizations and respect human rights.

Key principles for corporate engagement to minimize company’s negative impacts on society

and enhance positive ones were identified as:

- Strategic commitment at CEO and board level, with leadership supported by management systems and incentive and training structures to mainstream policies into the company’s daily activities.

**“We strongly believe that good governance, accountability, a firm anti-corruption stance and strong institutions are important, as is a competitive and socially responsible private sector serving as an economic development motor, oriented in values, with an interdependent relationship with the workers.”**

Enrique Arturo de Obarrio, Founding Vice-President, Private Sector of Americas

- Risk and impact analysis to evaluate conflict related risks and their impact on the company’s core business.
- Dialogue and consultation with key stakeholder groups on a regular and consultative basis.
- Partnership and collective action with stakeholders to address sensitive political and public policy issues and to invest in practical projects.
- Evaluation and accountability, including identification of key performance indicators for measuring the company’s impacts and reporting on these to internal and external stakeholders.

Specific examples of private sector contributions to securing peace and democracy in the Latin American context were noted including support for conflict prevention in Honduras, democratic





elections in Venezuela and respect for human rights in Cuba, as well as education-related activities in the realms of in Brazil. While participants generally recognized the role of the private sector not only in creating wealth, but in contributing to the creation of peaceful societies – both out of self-interest and from a philanthropic perspective – all agreed that a great deal more is required in terms

of participating in and contributing to wider society. In this respect, it was reported that the OAS has developed a relationship with the private sector and that specifics and modalities of future private sector contributions (providing skills training, building facilities, etc.) will be discussed and developed in the context of regional planning.



# STRATEGIC AND STRUCTURED COOPERATION BETWEEN ACTORS

Perspectives and experiences of cooperation between different actors in promoting peace, development and security were presented and the options, structures and mechanisms for strengthening the global peace and security architecture through more strategic and structured multi-actor cooperation examined.

## UN-RIGO

Recognizing the increasingly crucial role played by RIGOs in peace and security all over the world – a relatively new phenomenon in terms of the UN system – the DPA has developed capacity-building programs with RIGOs to raise awareness of mediation processes and to share expertise between RIGOs and the UN. A ten-year program with the AU has a component specifically on mediation involving mutual training of one another's staff, while a joint one-year program with OAS also features training and staff exchange. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has just requested a similar program.

RIGO representatives affirmed the need to improve and make more operational UN-RIGO relationships in terms of preventing and addressing violent conflict. The European Union's Instrument for Stability (IFS), for example, works with UN organizations and other international peacebuilding partners to jointly develop tools and mechanisms to improve the EU's response to crisis situations. The OAS also engages both upwards to the UN and downwards to sub-regional entities such as SICA as in the case of Honduras, for example. In that case, statements from the UNSG helped provide legitimacy for OAS engagement.

## UN-CIVIL SOCIETY

There is a potentially valuable role for civil society where conflict parties prefer a 'third party' mediator unaffiliated to any government or IGO. Civil society can approach the MSU for assistance where they are involved in mediation, but lack the capacity to design or deliver a negotiation process, for example. The willingness and availability of the UN to provide assistance, share expertise and engage in dialogue was stressed. Civil society actors must, however, be able to demonstrate their credibility with the conflict parties involved

(who must have requested or be willing to accept their assistance as a 'third party' actor).

## RIGO-CIVIL SOCIETY

Much of the discussions focused on regional and sub-regional perspectives and experiences of collaboration between RIGOs and CSOs in promoting regional peace, development and security. Obstacles, challenges – and examples of best practices – were considered in the African, Latin American and Pacific contexts in particular. Participants were also provided with an overview of EU-civil society engagement in countries outside the Union in which it is engaged.

**African Union (AU):** The AU's Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) is an advisory organ designed to give voice within AU institutions and

**“The Department of Political Affairs recognizes the value of RIGOs’ regional focus and knowledge in providing the UN with perspectives and expertise it would not otherwise have and has worked recently with the AU in Sudan, SADC in Madagascar and the OSCE in Georgia”**

Ambassador Levent Bilman, Head of the Policy and Mediation Division, UN Department of Political Affairs

decision-making processes to CSOs from a wide range of sectors including labour, business and professional groups, service providers and policy think tanks, both from within Africa and the African diaspora. Criteria for membership are established by the ECOSOCC Statutes. Some funding requirements (specifically that 50% of organisational funds are derived from membership) have been criticised by CSOs. There are four main ways in which CSOs engage the AU:

1. *Institutional spaces:* Members of ECOSOCC have an official place in AU structures.
2. *Invited spaces:* Any organization may be invited to attend AU activities.
3. *Created spaces:* Organizing autonomous



activities related to AU issues and processes.

4. *Joint spaces:* Organizing joint activities with AU organs.

In addition to being members of the newly established ECOSOCC, NGOs may also apply for observer status with the AU (although funding criteria are also problematic here). Others have signed MoUs with the AU Commission to provide technical assistance. In practice, it was reported, the AU engages with civil society at local level and has accords with various organizations (think tanks, universities, INGOs, etc.).

regional CSO network, WANEP, is grounded in a 2003 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). ECOWARN informs the interventions of ECOWAS and others by providing regular, timely, accurate, reliable and verifiable situational reports that chart the risk in each country. A daily regional synopsis highlights significant developments and hot spots (the focus is now on Liberia, for example). Data collection and analysis feed into policy briefs submitted to the Early Warning Department.

**Latin America:** A presentation by the Executive President of the Regional Coordination of Economic

**“ECOWARN has transformed the peace and security landscape in Western Africa. While civil society has the expertise and every trend is now accurately monitored, the challenge is now to engage political will and translate warning into action”**

Emmanuel Bombande, Chair of GPPAC

**ECOWAS:** The relationship between ECOWAS and the West African Network of Peacebuilding (WANEP) provides an example of structured cooperation between a sub-regional organization and civil society in the field early warning and early response.

Early warning became a concern of ECOWAS in the context of a new generation of internal conflicts in the 1990’s (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Cote d’Ivoire, etc.) which had devastating consequences in terms of small arms and light weapons proliferation, refugees and internally placed persons (IDPs), trafficking in people, drugs and money, competition for high value resources, and ultimately poverty. In each case, the ECOWAS monitoring group (ECOMOG) was deployed, but on an unplanned ad hoc basis. The consequences of conflict, combined with the sometimes negative consequences of ECOMOG interventions highlighted the need to develop prevention capacity and to address the root causes of conflicts (including political instability, weak institutions, human rights abuses, etc.).

The ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN) was created as an observation and monitoring tool for conflict prevention and decision-making. Partnership with civil society is integral to the Protocol which provides legitimacy for structured cooperation. Engagement with the

and Social Research (CRIES) characterized RIGOs in the region as generally lacking specific effective mechanisms for civil society engagement particularly with respect to policy formulation and implementation – although their Charters may allow for this – as in the case of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), for example. The exception is the inter-American system of Human Rights where civil society can bring complaints.

The trend was charted from a traditionally antagonistic relationship between CSOs and governments/RIGOs, through to the radical social agendas of newly elected progressive governments in the past decade which provided the







first experience of a different kind of dialogue with RIGOs through the mechanism of social summits. However, CSOs have reportedly perceived a decline in RIGO efforts to engage since 2005/2006 and identified a lack of RIGO interest generally in having civil society input on specific issues regarding security. Specific barriers to engagement include not only inadequate mechanisms, but problems identifying individuals to engage with, the resistance of some officials to do so, and lack of democratic continuity as officials

change. The situation now was characterized by the presenter as one of ‘mutual indifference’ between RIGOs and

*SICA projects will need civil society participation to implement them especially in the areas of prevention and rehabilitation.*

civil society as efforts to engage have not yielded desired results for either party. Increasing civil society disappointment with RIGOs in the past 5 years has led some CSOs such as CRIES to change strategy and concentrate on working directly with Governments, including on track two initiatives (e.g. between Cuba and the US and Costa Rica and Nicaragua) that have achieved some success in influencing changes without involving RIGOs. Another focus is on preparing CSOs to deal with intra-state conflict related to natural resource extraction with some governments (e.g. El Salvador) requesting training for officials. The presenter concluded that better progress has been achieved in this way than by investing in work with RIGOs, while hoping nevertheless that new modes of RIGO-CSO cooperation may be found.

**Central American Integration System (SICA):** A presentation by SICA’s Director of Communications and Public Relations provided an insight into the development of multi-actor partnerships and strategies to promote sub-

cooperation in Central America, with civil society playing a crucial role.

Created in 1991, the concept behind SICA is for an inter-dependent and interactive regional system for peace and democracy towards sustainable development. Civil society, including private sector, participation, is regarded as central to the process. While the region is diverse and dynamic and democratic practice has been taking hold since the beginning of the 1990’s, the security situation is severely compromised, particularly by narco-business and criminal activities, including money laundering which threaten states’ social and economic fabric.

Through SICA, states have organized regionally to supplement and complement national action to address this situation (and to halt the resulting emigration flows), but the region cannot solve these problems alone. A regional security strategy developed and approved by a Group of Friends (including the US and Spain in a leadership role) is based on the notion of shared responsibility and is structured around four pillars: law enforcement; prevention; rehabilitation; and institutional strengthening. This should, it was suggested, be part of a wider strategy at all levels, recognizing the links between development and security and encompassing all dimensions. Financial support is, of course, crucial.

Civil society contributed to the process of strategy development (via workshops, etc.) and will have an indispensable role in its implementation, helping to improve security from family and neighborhood levels upwards. Civil society, it was suggested, therefore needs to fully take on this responsibility, looking beyond the interests of specific groups to address the broader issues.

In terms of structures and mechanisms to

facilitate such participation, SICA engages with civil society at regional level through a Consultative Committee – an independent and autonomous body made up of regional organizations representing civil society. Because of this structure, it is important that grass roots and national CSOs link across borders so their interests are represented by regional organizations. SICA provides space and support to the Committee and helps finance participation for the weaker members. The organization is also encouraging civil society entities to provide it with information.

In terms of whether current arrangements are sufficient to allow genuine civil society participation in the implementation of security strategy within the region, it was noted that the Security Unit of the Central American Security Commission and the Consultative Committee are in constant contact.

**Pacific Islands Forum (PIF):** The Deputy Secretary General of the PIF provided an overview of the genesis and development of current arrangements for civil society engagement on matters of regional security. The first step was in 2005 when a regional GPPAC meeting led to the first PIF-CSO meeting to discuss peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Directed by the Forum Regional Security Committee, the PIF subsequently conducted research and consultations leading to recognition of the important role of civil society in these areas. The Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration (2005-15) likewise acknowledges the need for civil society cooperation in achieving goals of enhancing and stimulating growth, sustainable development, good governance and security.

A mechanism for structured engagement with civil society set up in 2009 entails bi-annual dialogue workshops. Participants include the Forum Secretariat, Pacific IGOs, representatives of regional CSOs, development partners, and PIF diplomatic

missions in Suva and Fiji, as well as of the EU, UN agencies and the Red Cross. Workshops are timed and structured so that civil society can feed directly into formal regional policy making processes. They also create space for civil society to dialogue directly with donor development agencies and other participants and to network amongst themselves. Although CSOs cannot attend formal Forum meetings, the reporting mechanism established through the dialogue allows CSOs to submit papers for consideration during Forum Regional Security Committee meetings. Where CSO recommendations are taken up and endorsed by the Committee a formal mandate is created for the Secretariat to address the issues raised. The PIF has also used other models of engagement through which CSOs have contributed directly to regional policy-making – including involvement in disability, health, education and trade meetings.

**European Union:** The Instrument for Stability (IfS) fosters dialogue with civil society, supports civil society capacity-building activities in conflict-prone or conflict-affected countries, and works extensively with civil society within the context of IfS short-term crisis response measures. The Civil Society Dialogue Network managed by the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) is open to all civil society actors and provides a forum for civil society to engage with EU policy-makers on peacebuilding issues. In addition, EU Delegations engage extensively with civil society in-country and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions are often specifically tasked under their mandates to engage with civil society – although each mission has its own mandate and modes of civil society engagement are conditioned by the situation on the ground. While one participant alluded to the perceived exclusion of civil society from mediation in Kosovo, the EU representative referred different tracks of diplomacy and the fact that mediation by nature will not always be transparent.

#### Box 6. Challenges for PIF-civil society cooperation

*The dialogue process is still in its infancy, the format a work in progress. Levels of civil society response – due to capacity constraints and competing priorities – are sometimes disappointing. The Secretariat also needs to encourage its own members to fully utilize the opportunity to engage with civil society concerns. In addition, there is a risk that having endorsed a regional mechanism for CSO engagement, Forum members may let efforts at national level slip. Ultimately the challenge is to encourage all stakeholders to utilize the mechanisms in place to engage constructively, feed into forum processes and influence policy in the region.*

*Ms. Andie Fong-Toy (AFT), Deputy Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum*

## MULTI-ACTOR COOPERATION THROUGH SOCIAL DIALOGUE

A representative of the Private Sector of the Americas emphasized the need to address together the root causes of instability by building social cohesion within shared societies based on a mutual sense of belonging, shared vision and a common project. This can be achieved most effectively through social dialogue.

Proposal: The creation of a new formal mechanism was proposed whereby all sectors would contribute and interact on the agenda for development and global peace through a multilateral alliance with agreed goals to be implemented over time. Its effective functioning would require legitimate and authorized representation of different interest groups and networks from within each sector. All parties, governments included, would enjoy equal parity and would need to exhibit a constructive attitude to allow confidence-building between sectors. Follow-up would be assured through a commonly agreed mechanism involving regular (annual or bi-annual) meetings. An emphasis on public service delivery, especially education would help inspire public trust and promote cohesion.

To encourage sustainability, it was suggested that such a mechanism should also involve academia as a neutral player that can assist in the understanding and analysis of problems and inform relevant policy. An International Centre for Development, involving all sectors, could assist in economic projection and provide context for discussions. It was noted that some regions already enjoy such resources. Countries belonging to the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), for example, can refer to the Greater Horn Horizon Forum, a regional think tank comprised of intellectuals working on the Horn of

### Box 7. Institutionalizing processes of social dialogue: examples from Latin America

*In Panama a process of dialogue through the National Council for Development involving all sectors has led to consensus on an enduring national strategy for development. Crucially, necessary resources have been committed to 2025 to realize agreed development goals.*

*At the regional level, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has established in-country civil society consultative bodies comprising qualified representatives of different sectors which advise the Bank on the impact of the different projects in the respective countries, serve as liaison with the different stakeholders and also to provide feedback from them to the Bank.*

*The OAS has established mechanisms for the private sector, civil society, workers and youth to channel formal proposals and recommendations into the OAS Annual General Assembly and Presidential Summit of the Americas.*

*Enrique de Obarrio (EdO), Vice-President of the Private Sector of the Americas*

Africa.

It was suggested that other actors might also be involved in the proposed mechanism such as GPPAC, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Club de Madrid, and INGOs such as the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington, for example. In the course of discussions, the potentials roles and capacities of different stakeholders – religious, youth, etc. – and modalities of their participation were debated.





## ENHANCING RIGO-CSO COOPERATION: KEY QUESTIONS



The following key questions arose in the course of discussions:

**How can governments, RIGOs and civil society overcome inherent tensions and improve collaboration?** Participants stressed the need to build trust and better coordination between different actors, to shift to less adversarial modes of engagement, take collective responsibility and work constructively together in pursuit of peacebuilding priorities (poverty reduction, institution of democratic processes, respect for human rights, etc.) and in preparing to address new challenges and shocks to the global system. The need for engagement with governments that are not party to international agreements and with non-state armed groups involved in conflict was also noted in this regard.

The importance of changing mindsets was underlined as integral to this process from which structures would then follow. It was suggested that business-based systems of co-creation and learning together promoted by e.g. the Society for Organizational Learning could be useful in bringing about such change and building sustainable futures. The role of the Swedish Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA) in providing joint trainings for civil society and a range of RIGOs (AU, OAS, OSCE, AL and OIC) in a process of common learning in promoting peace was also mentioned positively as

something that could be developed and built upon.

RIGOs generally expressed an appreciation for the potential input of civil society, indicating that ‘the door is open’ politically, while also admitting to imperfect mechanisms and technical obstacles hindering this process. Specific steps to improve relationships relate to: identifying and nurturing relationships with contacts within RIGOs, joint RIGO-CSO capacity-building workshops as a way of enabling personal relationships, and establishing new mechanisms (e.g. the liaison office that has been requested by civil society attending OAS summits).

**Who decides which CSOs are to be engaged in dialogue with RIGOs and what is the process of selection?** The need for clear independence in selection of representatives from CSOs to regional fora was highlighted, as was the importance of ensuring a level playing field so that different voices are given equal weight. Different regional systems were examined in this respect:

In the OAS, CSOs submit an application and are subject to an approval process in which all member states have a say. Once approved the CSO is part of a registry that gives privileges in terms of taking part in dialogue. While sometimes a state refuses to approve an application, it must have very strong arguments to go against the general opinion. In addition, all CSOs enjoy opportunities to get involved, through portals and dialogue processes, etc. They can do so before meetings and engage directly with Heads of State and Government during the Summit of the Americas.

In the PIF system, the Secretariat makes the selection, which is limited to regional organizations not national CSOs. There is also a system whereby CSOs can become affiliated, although this has not really been taken up.

In the EU context, forms of civil society dialogue depend on the mechanism. For example, the civil society Dialogue Network has an events portal to which CSOs can register to be kept informed. In terms of funding, a call for proposals is issued. EPLO, in particular has a responsibility to make sure all major CSOs working on a situation/subject are made



aware of relevant opportunities.

How can CSOs themselves pursue more effective engagement? A number of participants highlighted the need for civil society to fully enter and make use of available spaces and opportunities for engagement. RIGO representatives stressed that CSOs must be able to establish that they are well-organized, have internally accountability systems, and are able to deliver quality inputs. It was suggested that CSOs should organize themselves better structurally at country and regional levels, selecting individuals to represent the body of views within society more effectively – so minimizing competition for attention and space and maximizing coherence. It was also proposed that civil society should be more proactive in making concrete and comprehensive proposals for strengthening frameworks for engagement.

What is the potential for collaboration between RIGOs and civil society in policy-making and implementation? Most RIGO representatives expressed a desire to cooperate with civil society in policy design, development and implementation in a more meaningful way. With respect to ECOWAS, for example, it was noted that RIGO and civil society

civil society work in genuine partnership on early warning, although there are gaps in implementation reflected in structural weaknesses when it comes to timely response capacity. Regarding the OAS, it was observed that civil society has come a long way in terms of guiding policy. The next step is to develop genuine CSO involvement in decision-making processes and implementation. It was suggested in light of experience in South-east Asia that consultation between state and civil society take place not only at high profile events like summits and ministerial meetings, where official positions are already determined and there is little room for change, but also in the processes of policy formulation. CSOs may need to be trained or train themselves in policymaking in order to optimize their effective input.

What is the role of the media in the space for partnerships? RIGO representatives affirmed that from their perspective, the media should be viewed as part of civil society and engaged with insofar as its activities relate to peacebuilding and conflict issues. One participant from civil society observed that new technologies can be useful, especially at regional level, rather than trying to engage individually with different media outlets.



# The Way Forward:

## Recommendations on Improving Cooperation between the UN RIGOs and CSOs

The main goal of the conference was to make a contribution to the global peacebuilding architecture by creating a forum for further exchanges and establishing a community of practice and knowledge sharing among different stakeholders. The longer-term outcomes that the conference aimed to contribute towards are three-fold: a) Increased cooperation and exchange between RIGOs from different regions in the world; b) Increased cooperation and exchange between CSOs from different regions; c) Increased cooperation between CSOs and regional and sub-regional organizations in their respective geographic area. Specific options and recommendations for follow-up action to sustain this process of exchange and ultimately build the capacity of, and improve cooperation between, different actors were identified as follows:

### **Increased capacity, cooperation and exchange amongst RIGOs & between RIGOs and the UN**

- Convene regular conferences among RIGOs on specific themes that resonate with civil society and with their participation.
- Conduct regular exchange, bilateral or multi, between RIGOs regarding experiences of engagement with civil society.
- Review, express, and embed international values, instruments and norms in RIGO charters, mechanisms, e.g. International Human Rights Law, UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), etc.
- Strengthen RIGO voice and interventions within global multi-laterals on specific issues, e.g. via a RIGO caucus in the UN (as per the campaign for a democracy caucus).
- Map out existing models of early warning and crucially the transition to early action and establish a mechanism to share early warning 'products'.
- Seriously study the primacy of 'dialogue and mediation' as opposed to the utility of force as an option to resolve conflicts.

### **Increased cooperation and exchange between CSOs from different regions**

- Broaden, strengthen, and consolidate existing networks, mechanisms, and structures and link-up at all levels: local, national, regional and global. Go 'global': perhaps convene a 'unity'



conference with e.g. GPPAC, the International Coalition for the Responsibility to Protect, the International Steering Committee of the Community of Democracies, the World Development Movement; link with Occupy movements.

- Develop exchange programs on best practices on engaging with RIGOs and the UN.
- Develop capabilities on rigorous analysis and mapping vis-à-vis expectations from RIGOs including presenting and proposing alternatives and options.
- Have realistic expectations vis-à-vis engagement with RIGOs, multi-laterals or states, while campaigning and advocating for the ideal in public. 'Count our blessings'.



**Increased cooperation between CSOs and regional and sub-regional organizations in their respective geographic area**

- Conduct regular consultations and conferences between CSOs and RIGOs on pressing issues.
- RIGOs to consider adopting/adapting the UN model of official consultative status setting out criteria for admission (as has been done at UN level and in the AU).
- RIGOs to involve civil society more in field activities and convene a meeting to share experiences and capacities to this end.
- RIGOs and CSOs to involve private sector partners more in addressing conflicts at regional and local level.

- Conduct partnership activities on conflict prevention, peacebuilding, early warning; e.g. training, missions, conferences. Expand joint training for RIGO staff and CSOs.
- Create infrastructure to internally produce, distribute and globally communicate sensitive analyses of regional conflicts.
- Institutionalize partnerships via mechanisms such as MoUs, Terms of Reference, a CSO desk, liaison office, etc. and embed in structures or charters and by-laws
- RIGO secretariats to help influence the national capitals on engagement with civil society.
- CSOs to identify ‘champions’ within RIGOs and states.
- Develop ‘peoples’ diplomats’.
- Convene practitioner workshops and seminars to facilitate civil society input specifically on the development of guidance material for mediation in accordance with the recent UN General Assembly Resolution.
- Map potential candidates to increase capacity of the UN MSU’s roster with particular attention to women (currently 36%) and the global south (38%).
- Map potential women mediators (practitioners with real experience) for appointment by the UN SG.

**Continuing the process of cooperation between the UN, RIGOs and CSOs: next steps**

- Communicate the results of this conference to RIGO member states.
- Organize an ad hoc group from this conference to plan steps forward.
- Establish a steering committee comprising UN, RIGO, civil society and private sector representatives to determine follow-up options towards the development of a consultative forum on global peace and security.
- Convene a follow-up event (possibly hosted by the OAS in Washington DC) to identify complementarities and joint actions between multilateral organizations, CSOs and other key actors including the private sector. Invitees should include the chief of the NGO Section in UN, New York. This might lead to the establishment of an annual conference.