

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITY AND DEFENCE  
COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT

Public Hearing

## *Security and Development*

4 November 2008

Ladies & Gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking the organisers for inviting me to address this audience and by congratulating the Committee on Development, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and its Subcommittee on Security and Defence, of the European Parliament for having created this timely opportunity. As you are certainly aware, the relation between security and development was singled out as a priority by the **Portuguese Presidency of the European Union** during the second semester of 2007. Our efforts in promoting policy coherence for development in several areas resulted in the Council Conclusions on Security and Development which were adopted by Development and Defence Ministers in November 2007, in their first-ever joint session. Almost one year later, this public hearing represents a particularly good moment to recall the main principles that were agreed upon, and to take a close look on progress made, so having been involved in the Portuguese Presidency, I regard this event with a special personal satisfaction.

The Council's Conclusions acknowledged the link between **security and development** and reiterated that there cannot be sustainable development without peace and security, and that without development and poverty eradication there will be no sustainable peace. There was consensus that this nexus between development and security should inform EU strategies and policies in order to contribute to the coherence of EU external action and to build synergies between cross-cutting issues such as human rights, gender, promotion of democracy, governance, migrations, the rule of law and environmental sustainability.

One of our central concerns over the past few years, and during our Presidency was the need to continue the debate on how to provide adequate answers to countries that find themselves in situations of fragility, which clearly pose major challenges to sustainable development and to regional and international peace. We made some advances on a more coherent and coordinated use of the full range of tools and mechanisms available, and to a degree we lived up to our responsibility of being the most substantial and prominent of international donors.

But clearly we still have more work ahead of us. The challenge that we face is in bringing our political, diplomatic, development, security and humanitarian instruments into a single consistent framework, and doing this across a range of different countries. This is of course obvious, but this does not mean we are doing it. If we take a dispassionate look at the situation in the East of the Congo these very days, it is not difficult for us to realise that a coherent and consistent EU approach would provide a different panorama for the international community than the one we face today.

Over the past year or so we have travelled part of the way that is required for increasing our common development effectiveness in situations of fragility, namely with the creation of Pilot Groups in a number of countries. I think that we have now successfully established the proper range of instruments that can help us translate our concerns into reality. However, at the same time, I am also conscious that in the EU we have a tradition of being better at analysis, and at creating policy documents, than we are at actually effecting change on the ground, where it is relevant, so I would not suggest that we now have sufficient reasons to be satisfied with ourselves.

Turning to the specific theme of security and development, the two-way link between the two is now a matter of international consensus. This link between security and development obliges us to think about how to have better dialogue and synergies between the armed forces, the international peacekeeping missions, the development agencies and international NGOs that often work together in the same territory, but without a great deal of contact and coordination. This was what we had in mind during our Presidency when we identified a set of guidelines that the EU adopted for this work on security and development.

Unfortunately, in the EU we have had to develop two separate approaches, one of them on appropriate responses to situations of fragility, and the other on security and development, as if they were two unrelated processes. Obviously they are very closely related, but because of the “pillar” structure that we still have to live with, we have had to develop two strategies rather than one. This is one further consequence of the fact that we have not yet adopted the Lisbon Treaty, but leaving aside that question, the central point that I would like to make on the topic of security and development is that our current institutional reality obscures the fact that

when we talk about security and development we are talking first and foremost about **human security**.

In other words, when talking about security we have to have a wider concept that brings in welfare, safety and well being. Above all, this places people in the centre of the picture rather than states, which is a fairly obvious approach if we take into consideration that there are situations around the world in which the main threat to people's security comes from the state itself. Human security strategies have to be proactive strategies; they have to stress conflict prevention and peacebuilding rather than simply a humanitarian response after a disaster.

**I think that today we understand not only that we cannot aspire to development without security, but we cannot aspire to development without human security.** Our concerns about 'fragile states' and 'state failure', make sense in the context of human security, that is, a state's ability or willingness to function in a manner conducive to the welfare of the majority of its citizens. Human security is not only determined by political and military factors, but establishes a link between the maintenance of peace and the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and obliges us to think also about consequences in social, economic, and ecological issues.

**Adopting a human security framework means that efforts to solve the problems generated by violent conflict and by economic and social deprivation must be addressed in an integrated manner.** So in the EU, when we discuss how to integrate the security, development and human rights agendas, and how to obtain greater coherence, effectiveness and efficiency from the international system, we really need to be focusing on

how to provide a proper response to the requirements of a human security perspective. This in turn requires a substantial rethinking of current institutional arrangements and policies.

Mainstreaming human security as part of overall development policies requires us to have an approach that has to be very country or context-specific. Focusing on women and children in Afghanistan, for example, means focusing on a different set of issues and questions than it does in Guinea-Bissau, or the Western Balkans. The same goes for other sectoral policies. Everywhere there are some similarities, but everywhere we will fail unless we understand how to adapt our concerns to local realities.

And while looking at the specificities of each case, we should also be increasing international pressure for the signature of treaties that are focused on preventing the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, or developing approaches such as the Kimberley Process or the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative. These are global initiatives that can make vital local contributions.

I do not think that what I have said is excessively controversial, and yet it takes us to one of the contentious international debates of our times: the question of how to reconcile our international legal architecture, which is still mainly based on the notion of the strict respect for state sovereignty, with the dynamics of promoting human security, which often oblige a balance between the sovereignty of states and the security of citizens. I think that this can only be dealt with on a case by case basis, but at the same time there are a couple of general points that can be made.

The first general point is that the notion of “responsibility to protect” has made very serious advances in international law and in international discourse, and that this has altered the realities with which we are dealing. **It is simply no longer acceptable to adopt a maximalist interpretation of state sovereignty, and of the idea of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states.**

A second general point is that we not only have a “responsibility to protect”; we also have a previous “responsibility to prevent”. The responsibility to protect only appears once there has been a failure in the responsibility to prevent. When we link security and development to produce a human security perspective, we are in fact exercising our responsibility to prevent. Tragically, what we are witnessing now in the Congo is a failure not of our capacity to forecast or to analyse, but a failure of our capacity to prevent a conflict that was very predictable, followed by a failure of our responsibility to protect in circumstances that do not make us very proud of the EU.

Going deeper into the issues of prevention and protection will require us to establish closer and more frequent dialogue with other institutions that are grappling with the same problems, namely the African Union, and the more advanced sub-regional organisations such as ECOWAS and SADC. But in order to engage in this dialogue we ourselves have to make further progress in our security and development nexus.

### **National response**

Finally, let me take this opportunity to briefly mention what we are trying to do in Portugal to improve our response to this set of issues. We are currently establishing a national action plan on security and development

which is the result of an inter-ministerial working group that brings together four different ministries: Foreign Affairs, which has both diplomacy and development aid responsibilities; Justice, Internal Affairs and Defence. The objective is to have general guidelines that can be applied to a range of different circumstances, combined with specific country plans for the countries with which Portugal works most closely, and I am thinking here of Guinea-Bissau, East Timor and São Tomé and Príncipe. These country plans establish the appropriate coordination mechanisms with other relevant actors, which may be bilateral, regional or multilateral.

Rather than inventing new mechanisms, we intend to promote a better efficacy of the existing ones, be those directed at development policies, or the ones directed at security concerns. Several European countries have made some exercises in developing national tools that are more effective in dealing with fragility situations and to include their actions in regional dynamics and I believe that is an effort to be praised. As we are all aware, our traditional vertical division of governance tasks are increasingly incapable of managing the real challenges that we face, and we must adapt our policies and instruments if we are to be relevant. And as far as security and development is concerned, we still have a considerable amount of adaptation ahead of us. That is why I would like to end by commending the European Parliament for the interest that it has shown in one of the biggest global concerns of our time.

Thank you very much.

João Gomes Cravinho