: Programme

Berlin Summer Dialogue 2017

Exclusion as a Cause of Violent Conflict – Strategies for International Cooperation

Berlin Town Hall
28-29 June 2017

Conference languages
German/English (simultaneous interpretation)

#BSD17

BACKGROUND

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, on taking office in January, pledged to make 2017 a year for peace. A glance at the reality reveals the scale of the challenge: according to the OECD, over the last 15 years, 53 countries have been or are now affected by some form of political violence. These comprise 3.34 billion people, or almost half of the world's population. Many conflicts simmer for years, if not decades, with lasting peace tending to be the exception rather than the rule. Recurrent outbreaks of violence pose a threat to peaceful social relations and cohesion and to economic development in many countries.

The emergence, escalation and recurrent outbreaks of violent conflicts have complex causes. Social, political and economic exclusion often play a substantial role. They are evident in the abuse of power by a minority at the expense of the rest of the population; lack of opportunities for public participation in political processes; inequitable access to resources and public services – these are just some of the factors that come into play. Unless these forms of exclusion are successfully addressed in efforts to bring peace, they often sow the seeds of future violence.

Ultimately, the foundations for peaceful relations must be laid by the societies themselves. However, the international community also has a responsibility to take common action to address inequality and exclusion. Agenda 2030's Goals 10 and Goal 16 focus specifically on reducing inequality and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies. Creating synergies between local and international stakeholders through appropriate use of available toolkits and mechanisms has a key role to play in the implementation of Agenda 2030.

In this complex context, what can be done to sharpen all the various stakeholders' awareness of exclusion and marginalisation? Which forms are most likely to cause conflict? How can the international community contribute to reducing exclusion and extreme inequality in contexts of violence? And what can be done to ensure that international frameworks and external action do not worsen exclusion and inequality?

These are just some of the questions that we would like to explore with experts from politics and administration, civil society and academia at this year's Berlin Summer Dialogue. The dialogue with experts from affected regions and from international institutions will focus particularly on the impacts of exclusion in the economic, social and political spheres. Participants will then consider how confidence in government and social structures can be rebuilt during and after violent conflict.

: Wednesday, 28 June 2017

PUBLIC EVENING SESSION

"LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND" – A PARADIGM FOR INTERNATIONAL CRISIS ENGAGEMENT?

Crises and conflicts continue to pose major challenges for the international community. Especially people living in poverty are affected. The universal Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is linked to an ambitious commitment to 'leave no one behind'. Has this claim been considered in the international management of conflicts? Has social, political and economic exclusion been taken into account as a cause and intensifier of violent conflicts? What does a comprehensive peacebuilding entail? Those questions are being discussed within the United Nations around the concept of "sustaining peace". The German Government has also agreed upon a new approach to crisis prevention and peacebuilding in light of the current challenges.

- What role does social, political and economic exclusion play in the emergence of violent conflict?
- How is the 'leave no one behind' paradigm being implemented in international crisis engagement at present?
- Which measures can Germany take to reduce exclusion and thus contribute to conflict prevention at an early stage?
- Is there a risk that international engagement will worsen existing forms of exclusion or trigger new ones?

17:00 hrs	Registration
	Chair
	Angelika Spelten
	Institute for Development and Peace (INEF), University of Duisburg-Essen
	Working Group on Peace and Development (FriEnt), Bonn
17:30 hrs	Welcome
	Alexander Fischer
	Permanent Secretary of State
	Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social issues, State of Berlin
17:40 hrs	Panel discussion
	Dr Véronique Dudouet
	Programme Director Conflict Transformation Research
	Berghof Foundation, Berlin
	Dr Ute Finckh-Krämer MP
	Member of the Subcommittee on Civilian Crisis Prevention,
	Conflict Management and Integrated Action
	German Parliament, Berlin
	Dr Thomas Helfen
	Head of the division "Peace and Security; Disaster Risk Management"
	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Berlin
	Oury Traoré
	Executive Director
	Madiba Institute for Leadership in West Africa (MILWA), Dakar
Followed by	Q&A
19:30 hrs	Reception
	Hosted by the Governing Mayor of Berlin

: Thursday, 29 June 2017

8:45 hrs	Registration

Chair
Thomas Nehls
Freelance Journalist

9:15 hrs	Welcome

Dr Thomas Helfen
Head of the division "Peace and Security; Disaster Risk Management"
Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Berlin
Dr Marianne Beisheim
Member of the Executive Committee, Development and Peace Foundation (sef:)
Senior Associate, Research Division "Global Issues"
German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Berlin

SESSION I
THE EXCLUSION/VIOLENT CONFLICT NEXUS

- Which forms of exclusion and marginalisation have most potential to cause violent conflict?

- How do violence and exclusion interact?

- How can inclusion be built into peace processes in order to overcome exclusion as a cause of violent conflict?

9:30 hrs	Keynote

Professor Lars-Erik Cederman
Professor for International Conflict Research
Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS), ETH Zurich

followed by	Q&A

SESSION II
INEQUITABLE ACCESS TO RESOURCES: ECONOMIC INCLUSION AS A PREREQUISITE FOR PEACE

Competition over access to resources is one of the main causes of violent conflict. In many cases, land, natural or financial resources are controlled by minority elites, with no sharing of benefits with the public at large. This economic marginalisation is often accompanied by social exclusion, characterised by a lack of access to general interest services such as health care and education. Ensuring equitable and universal access to resources is a fundamental government responsibility. However, the economic and financial policies pursued by the international community also play a role in the emergence and deepening of inequality.

- To what extent is the international community responsible for deepening economic and social inequalities within states?

- What opportunities are available for development cooperation to reduce economic exclusion in contexts of violence?

- What tools are available to the international community in its efforts to achieve more equitable resource access?

- What can be done to ensure that humanitarian assistance and development cooperation do not perpetuate or exacerbate economic and social exclusion during and after violent conflicts?

10:00 hrs	Panel discussion
	Michel Rutger Richter
	Co-Director
	SPARK, Amsterdam
	Professor Indra de Soysa
	Department of Sociology and Political Science
	Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Dragvoll
followed by	Q&A
11:15 hrs	Coffee break

SESSION III
INEQUITABLE ACCESS TO DECISION-MAKING: STRENGTHENING POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasises the importance of inclusive societies and good governance, and particularly transparency, accountability and the rule of law, for peaceful development. Governments of countries affected by armed conflict tend to have weak legitimacy and limited capacity to act. Many of these countries also lack an independent judiciary built on principles of fairness. Civil society generally has few opportunities to organise, operating in difficult conditions if, indeed, it is permitted to exist at all. For external actors, state and non-state alike, this environment is particularly challenging.

- In contexts of violence, is it enough to support statebuilding and the establishment of institutions that meet formal good governance criteria?

- How can international actors help to strengthen political representation and social participation in countries and regions affected by violent conflicts?

- How can civil society be strengthened through external action, with no loss of identity and credibility?

11:45 hrs	Panel discussion
	Dr Heike Kuhn
	Head of Division
	"Human Rights; gender equality; inclusion of persons with disabilities"
	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Bonn
	Aurélien Tobie
	Senior Researcher
	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Stockholm
	Luxshi Vimalarajah
	Programme Director Dialogue, Mediation & Peace Support Structures
	Berghof Foundation, Berlin
Followed by	Q&A
13:00 hrs	Lunch break

SESSION IV

INEQUITABLE ACCESS TO SOCIETY – (RE)BUILDING SOCIAL COHESION

Violent conflict and crises damage social cohesion. In conflict situations, the entire fabric of society is transformed, not least as a result of displacement and migration, forcing people to rebuild their lives in their own regions or elsewhere. Life becomes more precarious, the future looks less secure and distrust of others increases. Confidence in politicians and institutions also declines, particularly in protracted conflicts.

- How can external actors help to (re)build social cohesion during and after violent conflict?

- What type of project can make a tangible contribution to reconciliation, and how should such projects be designed?

- What do international actors need to consider if they themselves are not to worsen resentment and exclusion?

- What can international organisations do to build trust in government and social structures over the long term?

14:15 hrs	Panel discussion
	Jonathan Cohen
	Executive Director
	Conciliation Resources, London
	Dr Sabine Kurtenbach
	Senior Research Fellow
	GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Hamburg
	Marcos Smith
	Coordinator
	Civil Peace Service Programme Cambodia
	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Phnom Penh
Followed by	Q&A

15:30 hrs	Conclusions and wrap-up
16:00 hrs	Closing remarks by the organisers
	Dr Michèle Roth
	Executive Director
	Development and Peace Foundation (sef:), Bonn