

EU FOREIGN POLICY OPTIONS

EU Foreign Policy Options (EFPO)

Roundtable series organised by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, bringing together experts and policy-makers to debate the EU's emerging options in international affairs.

THE EU'S CAPACITIES IN PEACE MEDIATION

Theme

Peace mediation is an increasingly heterogeneous and competitive playing field, in which states have to cooperate with new types of actors and devise new means to conduct successful third party interventions in peace negotiation processes. Today's peace mediation involves a greater number and diversity of actors than ever before. States can no longer function as unitary actors, relying on its governmental resources and official structures alone, to perform successful peace mediation. Rather, states are embedded in global networks of international as well as sub-state actors like non-governmental organisations and civic actors, which they have to rely on in order to perform effective third party interventions in peace negotiation processes. The European Union is currently putting in place new institutional solutions, mechanisms and modes of action to engage successfully in peace mediation.

Our roundtable discussions will raise the question how the EU could provide an added value in this field. In 2009 the EU endorsed a 'Concept on Strengthening EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities'. The Concept underlines that EU needs to develop arrangements, which allow it to respond rapidly to conflict situations in which opportunities for mediation exist.

Following the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) also structural decisions have been made to strengthen the EU's capacities. Following the UN example, which established its Mediation Support Unit in 2008, the EEAS has recently established the Peacebuilding, Conflict Prevention and Mediation Unit.

A number of actors – whether member states (such as Finland or Sweden) or non-state actors such as the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) and other peace-building NGOs and think tanks have encouraged the European Union to enhance its capacities in preventing diplomacy and mediation.

Format

Each seminar will address a chosen topic among a small (max 30) group of relevant invited stakeholders: researchers, diplomats, politicians et al. Two speakers will be invited to provide short introductions (15 min.), presenting different views on the topic and focusing on the EU's policy options. In order to allow for a frank exchange and out-of-the-box thinking the event will be closed to the public and under Chatham House Rule. Summaries of the proceedings will be prepared by the FIIA and distributed to all participants.