



## Germany's Responsibility in International Politics (II) – Topic-Specific Partnerships in Development Cooperation

*Working Group of Young Foreign Policy Experts*

### Key Points

- It is in Germany's interest to integrate emerging powers into the existing institutional framework of international relations. Consequently, Berlin should advocate the identification of potential partners among the new powers in relation to topics of pressing international importance and promote the establishment and fostering of topic-specific partnerships.
- To imbue Germany's new responsibility in the world with life, its involvement with the UN peacekeeping missions should be strengthened in terms of both personnel and equipment. This will enable Germany to increase its visibility in the emerging economies and contribute to a fairer share of burdens between Global South and North.
- In a globalised world, the rapid spread of infectious diseases is becoming increasingly likely, heightening the danger of epidemics and pandemics. Germany and its partners should work towards a strengthening of local healthcare systems, early recognition and treatment of infectious diseases, and mitigation of the economic and social consequences of breakouts.
- Since 2002, Germany has had a binding sustainability strategy, thereby adopting a global pioneering role in the area of sustainable development. Germany should support partner countries in devising strategies of their own, paying special attention to the involvement of civil society actors.

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## Preface: Germany's responsibility in international politics

Germany must take on greater responsibility in the area of foreign policy. This was what President Joachim Gauck called for at the Munich Security Conference in early 2014, flanked by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence. Germany's new strength forms the starting point of the debate. Unlike other countries, it has survived the economic and financial crisis virtually unscathed and is on a sound economic footing. Germany also enjoys outstanding political stability. Out of this strength arises the responsibility to make greater efforts for maintaining the liberal world order, particularly since Germany derives great benefits from it as a trading nation. In view of the wars and conflicts in Europe and at its periphery, in the Ukraine and in the Middle East, the debate about Germany's new responsibility in international politics has particular resonance.

But what form should Germany's new responsibility take in a world that is becoming increasingly unstable? Which instruments should be strengthened? And what initiatives should the German government initiate and further?

Against the backdrop of this debate, the Working Group of Young Foreign Policy Experts of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has written three papers relating to the three areas where the acceptance of greater responsibility appears to be particularly urgent: the upcoming German OSCE Chairmanship (I) as well as the topics of Partnerships (II) and Security Policy (III). The authors provide concrete recommendations on how and where "responsibility" can be imbued with political life.

### 1. Topic-specific partnerships: capability to shape the future and emerging powers

There is an overwhelming consent at home and abroad that Germany has benefited greatly from the Western world order. It is still the case today that the international institutional framework established after World War II not only enables the participation and advancement of other countries, but is actually conducive to them. Germany therefore has an interest in the institutional structures of international relations being strengthened. To this end, emerging states need to be integrated into these structures, because their desire to help shape the future can be used most productively within the existing institutions. If these countries were to see their aspirations blocked there, they would be likely to set up competing institutions. And that is not in Germany's interest.

A starting point for strengthening both the global institutions and the roles played by Germany and its partner countries can be found first and foremost in the topics that are already on the agenda of the international community for 2015, but point far beyond the current year: UN peacekeeping missions, the handling of pandemics and diseases, and finally support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Important steps are currently being taken in these areas to provide direction for the future, with Germany being actively involved and providing initiative; these include the latest review of peacekeeping operations (Brahimi II)<sup>1</sup>, the far-reaching commitments of the G7 in the area of Global Health<sup>2</sup> and the Post-2015 Process<sup>3</sup>, which began in September with the adoption of the Agenda for Sustainable Development. In these three areas of responsibility, Germany also has particular strengths beyond its current engagement. Making more efficient use of these strengths would also do justice to the German government's ambition embodied in

By establishing topic-specific partnerships, Germany can identify states that are increasing in significance and with which it can collaborate constructively to shape the future.

2012 in the so-called *Gestaltungsmächtekonzept*<sup>4</sup> (strategy to cooperate with major emerging powers in shaping the new world order transcending the traditional European and Atlantic commitments). Topic-specific partnerships could further help Berlin to identify states which will gain in profile and importance and which could become genuine, constructive partners in shaping the future of world order also beyond any topic-specific engagement. This article will therefore examine several promising areas of development cooperation, where Germany can and should do more, concentrating particularly on the question of the partners with whom Germany can collaborate to drive forward efforts in specific areas in order to make as significant a contribution to global problem solving in those areas as possible.

## 2. Three promising fields of action

### 2.1 Greater involvement in UN peacekeeping missions

With over 126,000 soldiers in 16 blue helmet missions worldwide, the United Nations remains the most important organisation working for peace. While the number of missions remains constant, the UN is increasingly also operating in particularly high-risk environments. The report by the Independent High-Level Panel on Peace Operations published in June therefore proposes far-reaching reforms. Besides the necessary political backup, Germany should also provide significantly greater support to the UN peacekeeping missions in terms of equipment and personnel.

Although the Western states should take a particular interest in the success of the blue helmet missions, the statistics mainly show a continued decline in European engagement. Asia is currently contributing the majority of troops to UN-led missions. Even China, which had long been committed to a culture of restraint, is steadily increasing its footprint in blue helmet missions. With over 70,000 soldiers, African states and organisations in particular are taking on ever greater responsibility. In Haiti, it is largely Latin American Blue Helmets under Brazilian leadership who are taking on the task of stabilising their global region. Leaving financial support to one side, Germany's engagement has been marginal by comparison. Currently, only some 200 German soldiers and police officers are under UN command. However, the engagement with ISAF in Afghanistan, which was at times very sizable, shows that Germany does have the capability to conduct larger-scale operations abroad.

A more balanced sharing of burdens between the Global North and South would answer the call for a greater security engagement on the part of Germany and would allow it to demonstrate leadership in this area of responsibility. To this end, Germany needs partners with whom it can share the responsibility for global peace. Such an engagement would strengthen Germany's position within the UN and increase its visibility among the emerging powers. Thinking further ahead, this could also encourage greater cooperation in other areas such as trade, climate protection and technology. Public support can also be counted on: 74 % of Germans are in favour of participation in international peacekeeping missions.<sup>5</sup>

#### 2.1.1 Recommendations for action

##### a) Close capability gaps

Many of the African and Asian peacekeeping troops lack adequate equipment and training. These deficiencies are particularly dangerous when Blue Helmets come

Germany should help to close gaps in the area of military high-value capabilities required for UN operations.

under attack from armed groups or terrorists. They also hamper the protection of civilians, which has become an objective of many peacekeeping mission mandates. The commission tasked with scrutinising the German parliamentary approval process for military deployments (the so-called R uhe Commission) is not the only organisation to believe that the "UN requirement for high-value military capabilities" will continue to rise. While Germany has already sent a transport plane to Mali and set up a field hospital close to the capital Bamako, it could do significantly more to back up potential key partners. Germany can fall back on skills and experiences gained in Afghanistan in this context. Critical areas for increased German engagement include military reconnaissance, air transport, military engineering, medical assistance, equipment and training support. Besides the immediate boost to capabilities, such strengthening measures can also generate some longer-lasting positive effects, for instance with respect to the civilian supreme command over the armed forces of the partner countries and further democratisation in those countries.

#### b) Provision of troops

Above all, Germany must also become much more strongly involved in blue helmet missions with troops of its own. The majority of the German troops and police personnel are still involved in NATO and EU missions. But an increase in global economic power should go hand in hand with increased German participation in UN peacekeeping missions. Such an engagement would also send an important signal to potential partners with a large footprint in blue helmet missions outside the North Atlantic region, namely that the frequently difficult and thankless UN peacekeeping missions are not being offloaded onto newly industrialised and developing countries. The Dutch, for instance, have successfully deployed their well-trained and battle-hardened troops in Mali upon their return from Afghanistan. If Germany does not want to leave this important field of action with its great signalling power exclusively to the emerging nations, a greater troop engagement will be required – either by Germany alone or with partners from the European and transatlantic community of shared values.

#### 2.1.2 Partners

The potential partners include first and foremost those countries that have already shown their willingness for substantial involvement in blue helmet missions, such as India, Nigeria and Brazil, but also Argentina, which operates the regional training center for Blue Helmets in South America. In Africa in particular, regional formats have also proved successful for peacekeeping missions. Among the twenty largest providers of troops for blue helmet missions, there are additionally a number of countries that share Germany's values and appear ideal partners for measures to enhance and strengthen the United Nations and its peacekeeping missions:

- Asia: India and Nepal
- Africa: Senegal, Ghana and Nigeria
- Latin America: Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay
- Multilateral organisations: UN, African Union, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

#### 2.2 Global Health

In a world that is becoming increasingly connected, the risk of quickly spreading infectious diseases is becoming ever greater. One important step for improving



Germany has specific capabilities and resources to intensify the management of epidemics / pandemics around the world.

global health is the prevention of and fight against epidemics and pandemics, which have serious humanitarian, economic and security-related impacts. The recent Ebola epidemic in 2014 cost over 11,000 lives. The World Bank has put the economic impact of the epidemic on Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone at 1.6 billion US dollars in terms of lost economic output. The economic potential of the countries will suffer further long-term damage from an educational deficit as children whose schooling was interrupted by the epidemic frequently do not return to school afterwards. Where security is concerned, epidemics entail the danger of terrorists making concerted efforts to spread the disease (diseases as weapons). Added to this is the fact that the failure of governmental systems that are already fragile can be accelerated by the outbreak and inadequate containment of an epidemic, as the example of Liberia has shown. Each of them alone, but particularly in combination, these negative repercussions cry out for greater German engagement. Aside these objective requirements, a greater German engagement in this area of responsibility also makes sense because of its special capabilities. Germany has several internationally renowned medical institutes such as the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin and the Bernhard Nocht Institute in Hamburg, endowing it with the necessary capabilities in terms of personnel, scientific expertise and equipment to intensify the fight against epidemics and pandemics by not only exporting hardware to the affected country but also training multipliers on the ground.

### *2.2.1 Recommendations for action*

#### a) Strengthen local healthcare systems

The Six Point Plan that Chancellor Angela Merkel presented at the donor conference of the Global Vaccine Alliance (Gavi) stresses the need to strengthen the primary healthcare systems in states at special risk. Germany must continue to think holistically and prioritise the strengthening of local healthcare systems through measures such as funding and training healthcare professionals on all three fronts: prevention, early detection and management. This example shows how the announced measures can be implemented much more effectively in collaboration with partners in the different continents who can share the responsibility. Obvious partners include countries such as Nigeria, Senegal and Mali, which were able to utilise their good observer infrastructure and suitable laboratories to prevent the situation from becoming even worse during the Ebola crisis. In this context, taking on responsibility means not only taking measures yourself, but bringing other actors on board to maximise effectiveness through collaboration.

#### b) Strengthen response capability

It is not possible to prevent outbreaks of infectious diseases altogether, as has been shown by the recent cases of MERS-CoV (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, a coronavirus disease) in a highly developed country such as South Korea. It is therefore all the more urgent for healthcare capacities to be expanded to allow a fast and effective response in Germany as well as abroad. This includes measures such as checking people in public spaces for fever, particularly in airports and other hubs, as well as increasing the number of quarantine facilities. In this area, China could become a partner for an exchange of expertise with Germany, as its immediate and comprehensive responses to the first cases of H7N9 and to suspected cases of H1N1 infection (both viruses causing bird flu) have shown that valuable and appropriate lessons had been learnt from the first wave of bird flu (H5N1), which began in 2003.

In a globalised world, it will never be possible to prevent the outbreak of diseases altogether. Early detection of pathogens is therefore all the more important.

### c) Immunise other spheres of life

Besides these immediate health-related measures, there is above all a need for mitigating the security and economic consequences of epidemics. In concrete terms this means trying to “immunise” other spheres of life against the effects of a potential epidemic. Ever since the bird flu outbreak, Singapore has conducted so-called e-learning weeks every year, rehearsing the closure of schools and universities in the event of a crisis to prevent infection. Such measures can help to ensure that a country does not need to start from scratch after an epidemic.

#### 2.2.2 Partners

The obvious partners in this context are particularly those that have shown an interest in the research and development of drugs over recent years (also in the area of generic drugs, such as India and Brazil) as well as focusing their efforts on creating resilient structures for managing infectious diseases. By these efforts, the countries also perform important work for their neighbours. Aside from such efforts, China and India have also become major emerging markets for all types of health-related technologies simply due to their size:

- Asia: Singapore, China and India
- Africa: Nigeria, Senegal and Mali
- Latin America: Chile, Argentina and Brazil
- International organisations: WHO, Global Health Funds, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

### 2.3 Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

After the adoption of the Agenda for Sustainable Development in September, all signatory states are now called upon to define ambitious national sustainability strategies and to then implement these step by step by 2030. These strategies represent the national roadmaps for a sustainable improvement of living conditions in the member states of the United Nations. Good implementation strategies therefore provide the basis for further development progress in all countries – but particularly for those with the greatest deficits. Providing support to these countries in their efforts therefore forms a contribution to national as well as global sustainability. Germany has adopted a pioneering role in this area of responsibility. There has been a national sustainability strategy<sup>6</sup> in place since 2002, to which all government levels in Germany have been committed and which are due to be reviewed and revised via progress reports<sup>7</sup> published every four years; every two years, an indicator report is to be compiled, which will describe the progress made in the key areas of sustainability policy on the basis of 21 indicators. Since 2010, there has also been a programme of measures in place. The planning horizon of this programme goes beyond the next fifteen years, stretching as far as 2050. In this context, sustainability is a complex term, comprising economic, ecological and social dimensions. The purpose of the support recommended here is therefore not to work in all areas of sustainability in all countries, in other words to try and do everything everywhere. Given a situation of limited resources, the aim is to collaborate with strong partners in the regions around the globe to identify the specific fields where the greatest added value can be achieved in the area. Ultimately, the abstract term of “sustainability” must be made concrete in the dialogue with the partners. In this context, supporting the partner countries in devising and implementing sustainability strategies will represent a key element of the much-cited aim of “helping people to help themselves”.

Germany should develop sustainability strategies that are tailored specifically to individual partners.

### 2.3.1 Recommendations for action

#### a) Improve strategic capabilities

Sustainability begins with the definition of key aspects and strategies. The comprehensive SDG catalogue must first of all be sorted and prioritised according to the needs of the individual countries because not all development goals can be of equal importance to all countries in view of limited means. Most of the required knowledge is available in the partner countries themselves, but uncovering that knowledge will require a broad stakeholder approach within the respective states, involving a comprehensive national dialogue between the state, the scientific community, the Churches and civil society. To allow knowledge to circulate as freely as possible between different social actors and, above all, to allow it to be updated as and when required, facilities for exchanging information between state and expertise holders must be improved. Germany can support the partner countries in devising sustainability strategies, bringing to bear its own pertinent expertise, which was most recently demonstrated in connection with the Charter for the Future of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and during the review process of the Federal Foreign Office. Special attention should be paid in this context to local communities and to the need for the scientific community in the partner countries to be listened to and taken notice of. Germany could offer support for creating the appropriate legal framework for statutory consultation obligations in this connection. In addition, measures to further scientific research and cooperation with universities can help to enhance the capabilities for endogenous knowledge generation.

#### b) Strengthen implementation

Sustainability needs institutions and monitoring. The implementation and continuous monitoring of sustainability strategies need a functioning state as only the state has the authority to control and enforce measures in this area. Consequently, state institutions in the partner countries must be professionalised further in all their functions: as expertise holders, regulating authorities, implementing agencies, monitoring bodies and rule enforcers in all the areas of sustainability relevant to the particular country (besides the more workmanlike skills in devising the strategies themselves, this could, for instance, involve skills in the areas of water management, sustainable agriculture or the adaptation of human habitation). To ensure that governmental action serves the common good and not the interests of individual parties out for personal gain, national as well as local civil society actors in the partner countries must be enabled to effectively perform the role of watchdogs and independent expertise holders. In addition to providing support with the setting up of state institutions, concerted efforts should be made to further the establishment of networks in government and civil society (exchange with German civil servants at all administrative levels, national and international dialogue with representatives of NGOs and INGOs). Finally, the support should also include the targeted provision of intellectual and material support to civil society actors, particularly with respect to their monitoring capabilities.

#### c) Support regional influence

Sustainability needs regional multipliers. Helping people to help themselves does not only mean that Germany commits to further sustainable development in the partner countries themselves. It also means taking the partners seriously as players in their regional leadership role. Specific efforts should therefore be made to

To facilitate the implementation of the sustainability strategies, government institutions should be professionalised and civil society actors should be actively involved in the process.

enhance their regional function as beacons and multipliers, thus maximising the sustainability advances in their regions. Consequently, the partner countries should themselves provide active support in the area of sustainability to their immediate neighbours and the wider region. While Germany has no direct influence over this regional dimension, it can provide encouragement by engaging in multilateral and regional cooperation formats such as triangular cooperation projects in collaboration with the partner countries in areas of sustainability particularly important to the respective regions of the world. This could involve projects in regional preventative healthcare or regional food security, for instance.

### 2.3.2 Partners

Strengthening national implementation capabilities also means helping to strengthen the state structures in the partner countries, which can also produce positive long-term effects in other policy areas – particularly in those countries that are of particular significance to global sustainable development. Examples include Indonesia and Brazil on account of their exceptional biodiversity. India is potentially a leading market for sustainable technologies (e.g. e-mobility), while China represents one of the world's most important sustainability laboratories (e.g. in the area of decarbonisation) purely due to its size and strong government control. Further potential partners, who could also make effective contributions to sustainable development themselves, include South Africa and Mexico, which have high-class scientific facilities conducting their own research in areas relevant to development.

- Asia: Indonesia, India and China
- Africa: South Africa, Kenya and Ghana
- Latin America: Brazil, Mexico and Colombia
- International organisations: UNDP, UNEP, Regional UN Commissions

## 3. Outlook

The German government has never left any doubt about the fact that it does not aspire to the leadership role as an end in itself. Instead, Germany is interested in doing justice to its economic and political importance and in taking on a commensurate global responsibility, acting above all in collaboration with partners as a matter of principle. While the areas of responsibility referred to above made it onto the agenda this year, their significance goes far beyond 2015. A nation aspiring to provide continued leadership should therefore give thought to the matters outlined above.

One striking insight from the analysis is that some countries represent obvious partners by virtue of their own pioneering and leadership roles. They are already acting as multipliers in their own regions and operate at the centre of various networks (trade, communication, transport, knowledge). Some of these partners share key Western values and are set to at least draw level with Germany in terms of international importance over the next few years: Nigeria in Africa, India in Asia and Brazil in Latin America. With some reservations regarding the values it embraces, this also applies to a country like China, which is already of major importance in many areas of the global order. Besides these established leading powers, there are, however, also smaller countries such as Argentina, Senegal, Ghana and Singapore, which play a leadership role in certain areas in their regions and which could also potentially act as influential powers, as multipliers and as privileged cooperation partners. Finally, Germany should take measures to strengthen international

The areas of responsibility of the UN peace-keeping missions, global health and sustainable development extend far beyond 2015 in terms of their importance.



organisations – such as the WHO in particular in the area of healthcare – in their cooperation function by way of operational partnerships.

For Germany, this means two things: Firstly, there is no need to necessarily restrict its operational partnerships to a small number of large partner states, nor would this be helpful in areas around the world where regional hierarchies are emerging. Secondly, Germany will have to be prepared to cooperate with important, yet difficult partners in specific areas although this may not be in tune with its value-based foreign policy. Even autocratic regimes may produce added value for global governance in opportune specific instances.

By means of topic-specific partnerships, Germany will be able to achieve more than just by trying to exercise its own responsibility appropriately. They offer the opportunity of forming long-lasting partnerships, which may help to stabilise the world order in line with our world view beyond the concrete topics.

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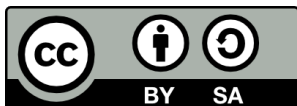
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